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ABSTRACT

The "Bulletin of the Caucus on Social Theory and Art Education" is an annual publication, with each issue devoted to a unified theme. The theme of this issue is aesthetic response. The following papers focus on the audience and the persons responding to art: "Attitudes of Three Urban Appalachian Teenagers Toward Selected Early Modern American Paintings" (Bonnie Southwind); "Issues Posed by the Study of Folk Art in Art Education" (Kristin G. Congdon); "Children's Views on Art in the Primary Grades, K-3" (Nancy R. Johnson); "Seeing Eye to I: Perceptual Development and Sense of Self" (Charles G. Wieder; Mary Ann C. Gray); "The People's Show: Promoting Critical Response" (Mary Stokrocki); and "The Pervasiveness of Culture: Significance for Art Education" (Barbara A. Boyer). The panel papers on the Feldman Model are: "The Feldman Method of Art Criticism: Is It Adequate for the Socially Concerned Art Educator?" (Tom Anderson); "Various Applications of the Feldman Method" (Jack Hobbs); "The Feldman Approach: A Catalyst for Examining Issues in Art Criticism Instruction" (Karen A. Hamblen); and "Feldman on Feldman" (Edmund Feldman). The final paper, "Professional Networking in Art Education" (Karen A. Hamblen) is an informative essay on the social and political underpinnings of art education from within the profession itself. (DB)

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THE BULLETIN

of the Caucus on Social Theory and Art Education

EDITED BY HELEN MUTH

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Preface

This is the sixth annual publication of the Caucus. Having begun in 1981, we have the good fortune to be coordinated with the times, six in eighty-six. But, more importantly, this issue of the Bulletin demonstrates that our interests are also coordinated with the times. Aesthetic response is central to a majority of the papers and, appropriately, the socially concerned perspective taken by the authors places the audience, the person or persons responding to art, at the center.

When confronted with the opportunity to make choices, the Appalachian teenagers in Southwind's study considered the aesthetic qualities of form, expression, and production in the context of their own experience and values. Southwind found their responses similar in kind if not in particulars to those of more experienced individuals. She cautions educators to introduce choice as an integral part of the aesthetic response process. In another paper, Hobbs raises the question of what forms or exemplars are to be used to develop aesthetic response skills. He acknowledges the continuing debate over quality but relates his own findings from his teaching experience which reinforce Southwind's findings. People respond to what they know; and when confronted with the unfamiliar, they look for those qualities with which they are familiar and for which they hold value.

Congdon's interest in folk art recognizes that aesthetic preferences do vary with various populations. She reports that most categorization of folk art comes from academia which, thereby, imposes its own bias, creating a sense of elitism in the process. She is concerned that academically trained art educators, in their intention to broaden the range of aesthetic responses their students experience, will focus only on museum art for art exemplars. Congdon ventures that the folk artist/critic may be the more valid resource for art educators to use for developing methodology for aesthetic interaction. She presents a substantial argument that folk arts should be in our curricula both for content and methodology.

The papers by Johnson and Wieder and Gray focus on children's learning. Johnson analyzes children's art knowledge from their actual dialogue. She emphasizes the importance of art teachers as agents of socialization and acknowledges that children do in fact learn what they are taught, whether the content is intentional or not. She highly recommends that art teachers be aware of the complexity involved and focus on teaching organized and comprehensive concepts. Wieder and Gray see development as an active role engaged in by children. The learner is perceived to be a self-initiating problem solver whose being and becoming are not limited to a recapitulation of the cultural context. They bring our attention to the lack of recognition current art education theory gives to this concept.

The People's Show illustrates the beneficial nature of involving all kinds of people in critical response to art. We might also extend the concerns raised by Stokrocki to include that of an adequately informed art educator. In his presentation on the Feldman Model, Hobbs states that art educators are obligated to be well informed in history, art history, and sociology. To this we might add that art educators need to be aware of the biases they have formed from their more formalized studies and to question their own interpretations not only of art forms but of the scholarly resources upon which they rely.

Boyer's paper, The Pervasiveness of Culture, also relates to the issues raised by Stokrocki's paper. Recognizing that cultural beliefs and assumptions are so internalized in our thinking and behavior, Boyer challenges art educators to identify our own biases. She states that not only must we work to unravel the pervasiveness of culture within educational settings and analyze how cultural attitudes related to art are internalized within a society and how these affect the teaching/learning process, if we are unaware of our own biases, we will be unable to improve upon the development of theories and practice in art education.

The Feldman Model of critical analysis was the focus of a major Caucus panel during the 1985 National Art Education Convention in Dallas. The panel presentations have been somewhat formalized in that each member, including Feldman, has responded with a paper for the Bulletin. An additional section on audience discussion which raised several appropriate questions related to aesthetic response has been included. Editorially, the authored papers have not been changed. Those who attended the presentations in Dallas will recognize the approaches each member of the panel took in discussing whether the Feldman Model could be used for social analysis.

Although I was unable to attend the panel discussion, my editorial observation is that whether the Feldman Model has social application depends primarily on the attitudes, values, and beliefs of the person instituting the model. Perhaps, it should be recognized that different situations call for different emphases. Personally, I have emphasized the descriptive phase when students are just beginning a more objective consideration of art and are not yet familiar with formal concerns. I have used the interpretive phase as the focus when talking with younger children, employing a number of why or could it be questions. I have also been in situations where the person guiding the discussion focused on essentially the formal elements and established interpretive closure based on internal evidence. This is conceivably possible and desirable with some exemplars and some audiences.

Hamblen points out the need to develop alternative formats for art criticism based on learning styles. Perhaps a beginning would be an articulation of the approaches suggested by Hobbs and Anderson in their papers and by the members of the audience in their discussion.

The final paper of Bulletin Six is an informative essay on the social and political underpinnings of art education essentially from within the profession itself though analogies can be drawn to other professions. Hamblen's writing is insightful, and the formal, statistical presentation is almost tongue in cheek.

I have enjoyed being editor of the Bulletin for the last two journals. It has made me aware of the number of individuals who prize the work of the Caucus. We again are indebted to Dean Donald L. McConkey of the School of Fine Arts and Communication, James Madison University, for his support.

Please, note that the Bulletin is available through the Caucus Treasurer.

Helen Muth
Southwest Missouri State University

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Karen A. Hamblen

Attitudes of Three Urban Appalachian Teenagers Toward Selected Early Modern American Paintings

Bonnie Southwind

Cincinnati Recreation Commission

Abstract

Three urban Appalachian teenagers were taken individually into an exhibit of early modern American art in the Cincinnati Art Museum. They were asked to choose one work that they wished to discuss. When the choice was made, they were asked to discuss the work, first freely and then directed by a set of questions. All three chose paintings in realistic styles that were of subjects familiar to them. Their discussions were limited by their level of training, but were otherwise perceptive and insightful. The act of choosing, the painting chosen, and the way it was discussed all seemed to both reveal and satisfy certain needs of each individual.

When an individual encounters a work of art, a number of complex and interesting things can happen. A painting, for instance, can be the stimulus for such a wide range of responses that it is conceivable that a whole book could be written about one single art lover's relationship with one single work. On a more practical scale, this paper is a consideration of the responses of three urban Appalachian youths to paintings hanging in the Cincinnati Art Museum. The purpose of this study was to determine the subjects' behavior, attitudes, and values concerning a kind of art, often referred to as high art, that is unfamiliar to them and is not highly valued in their subculture. As an art teacher teaching courses in drawing, painting and art appreciation, it became clear to me that if I had a better understanding of my students' responses to this body of art, I would be able to understand their work better, communicate better to them the values I saw in high art, and help them to develop their own appreciation of it.

Because what I was going to look at was fundamentally qualitative in nature, qualitative methods had to be found and modified for the task. Research in art education has historically made extensive use of methods developed in the social sciences, such as case study methods and ethnographic field work. It was assumed in the design of this study that useful information could be obtained by: (1) observation of undirected and partly undirected behavior, (2) free conversation about the art work, and (3) formal interview techniques. To varying degrees, assumptions were verified in the study, and some interesting and potentially useful insights grew out of the analysis of the qualitative data collected, especially regarding how the subjects' responses were shaped by their individual needs (Beittel, 1973; Bogden and Taylor, 1975; Sevigny, 1978; Web et al, 1966).

Background

As director of a recreation center in the Lower Price Hill section of Cincinnati, Ohio, I had the opportunity to develop an art program for the "invisible minority" of urban Appalachians who lived there (Brown, 1968; Campbell, 1969; Caudill, 1963; Coles, 1971; Giffin, 1956; Howell, 1973; Maloney, 1976; Morris, 1976; Philiber, McCoy, & Dillingham, 1981; Photiadis, 1976; Weller, 1966). The neighborhood is typical of this population. It is run down, economically depressed, rather violent, and populated by proud, independent immigrants from the Southern Highlands (City of Cincinnati, 1976). Hard living is the norm. It is a daily struggle to have enough to eat and a roof over one's head, but there are enough people there with good enough jobs that a number of houses are well-maintained, and a few have been given a kind of expensive restoration that characterizes more affluent Cincinnati neighborhoods.

The Three Subjects

As I developed an art program for the center, I became close to three teenagers who were especially responsive. The three, Fergie, Spider, and T.J. were good friends. They had entered enthusiastically into several art projects at the center, showing a range of abilities from the talented to the very talented. As I grew to know them better, their individual personalities became far more vivid to me than any generalization about urban Appalachian youth. Fergie was lively, cheerful, and an engaging nonstop conversationalist. T. J. displayed a macho, unsmiling exterior that just barely concealed a sensitive and skilled young artist. Spider, a young man of few words, seemed a bit stolid at times, but he had an easy charm that grew on people. Despite these positive qualities, they fit an unfortunate neighborhood norm: They were all having a great deal of difficulty with school, and all three ultimately dropped out of school (Wagner, 173). One of their few positive experiences in a school was that each of them spent a year in the art classes of a dedicated and ingenious artist-teacher, who has since left the area.

Cultural Preferences

Their alienation extends beyond school, too. The teenagers in Lower Price Hill do not connect in any significant way with traditional Appalachian arts and crafts. In an extended interview, all three subjects expressed a general lack of interest in Appalachian culture, and during a visit to Cincinnati's Appalachian Festival, they were openly bored with traditional crafts artifacts and expressed a dislike for mountain music and dancing.

Their chosen culture is much closer to the heavy metal variant of the youth-rock culture. Their tastes in poster art and music both reflect the energy and aggressiveness of this style. The posters in their rooms feature heavily muscled men fighting dangerous mythical beasts, often with a nubile woman on the scene. Also favored are portraits of actual predators, such as snakes and tigers.

They, and in fact all their friends, have an active dislike for punk and new wave styles. Fergie told an amusing, if a bit frightening, tale of a gathering of teens in a park where one was playing new wave on his large portable radio. One of the others told him to turn it off, he refused, and the first drew a pistol and shot the radio, effectively ending the concert. The first thing this incident brings to mind is Elvis Presley, who is a cult hero to these young people and who had a habit of shooting television sets that were broadcasting adverse reviews of his concerts. The incident also points up a connection between the neighborhood style and the youths' artistic tastes. Aggressiveness in males is a highly prized trait in Lower Price Hill. All three subjects reported that the main pastime of the older men, those in their twenties and thirties, was to get drunk and get into fights, which are occasionally fatal. There does seem to be a potential relationship between the aggressive male-dominated worlds of urban Appalachia and heavy metal rock. In this context, the subjects' very different responses to the paintings of the project are a bit surprising.

Desires for a Better Life

The subjects all exemplified the positive side of the Appalachian character too, in their self-reliance and independence, balanced by cohesiveness and mutual support. In Lower Price Hill, one public manifestation of these qualities has been a series of neighborhood restoration and beautification projects. Fergie, Spider, and T. J. share with the rest of the neighborhood a drive to establish a better life, both collectively on the streets of Lower Price Hill, and individually. This need in the three youths was often expressed by a desire to own expensive items such as high-powered cars and high-powered stereo systems --but it also had an essentially aesthetic component. Fergie, especially, participated in the aesthetic side. During the study he was employed as a carpenter restoring one of the houses in the area, and when asked what kind of art should be installed in public places, he made the creative suggestion that sculptures "that the kids could climb on" should be placed on street corners.

This emphasis on the aesthetic was no doubt affected by the context of this study and by my identity with them as an art teacher. T. J., though, showed no inclination to tell me what I wanted to hear. He was, instead, blunt to the point of rudeness in the expression of his preferences and in stating the limitations he unilaterally placed on his phase of the study. However, his responses to the aesthetic objects that were presented him were no different from those of the two more cooperative subjects, and he was, in some ways, more sensitive to mood and feeling.

The Field Work Phase

The field work for the study was conducted in the Cincinnati Art Museum. The three subjects were conducted separately to Room 80 of the museum, which houses a collection of American paintings, sculptures, and furniture from about the first four decades of the 20th century. Many of the paintings in this room are realistic, but there is a primitive, a cubist, an abstracted landscape, and a piece that would have been called pop in a later generation. The furniture is early modern, and the sculptures, which are quite small, are all decidedly romantic. The procedure of the study was to turn the subject loose in the room and observe his reactions and his overt responses to the art he saw. He was then instructed to choose one item to discuss with me. He was first given the opportunity to comment freely without direction and then to answer a series of questions about the piece.

For this study, I took ethnographic field techniques as a point of departure and modified them for the purpose. Instead of observing and interviewing the subjects in their natural habitat, I intentionally placed them in an unfamiliar environment to study their responses to art. As it turned out, however, one subject, Fergie, was quite conversant with the museum because of the frequent visits he made while he was a student in a summer art program at the Cincinnati Art Academy which is housed adjacent to the museum. This collection was new to him, though, and his previous experience did not seem to affect his reactions to the point that they were markedly different from those of the other two subjects, who had not experienced this museum in any significant way. (Spider had been there once on a school field trip several years ago, and T. J. had never been there.)

Styles of Orientation and Encounter

As one immediate outcome of this relatively nondirective approach, a clear difference in the style of orientation or encounter was observable in the three subjects. T. J. systematically went around the wall, thus missing the sculptures which were placed nearer the center of the room. He looked at each painting in turn, giving some of them close attention and others the merest glance. With a stopwatch, one could have produced a rough quantitative index of his interest in each painting, so consistent and systematic was his behavior. He volunteered the comment on one painting, Maxfield Parrish's Portrait of a Tree, that "It don't look like a painting." He made this remark more than once in praising the photographic realism of a number of paintings, including a large Sargent portrait of a young woman in the adjacent room. Spider, by contrast, was overselective. He went directly to one corner of the room and looked at no more than 6 paintings of the 20 or so in the room. Fergie, the lively one, engaged in a random walk moving diagonally across the room several times and into the next room where the contemporary abstract, optical, and pop collection is housed. It is difficult to say how many of the paintings in room 80 he actually saw, because of his radically nonlinear approach.

This differentiation in response styles among the three individuals having very similar backgrounds adds further support to the cautions that may be found throughout education literature about the stereotyping of minorities. Fergie, T. J., and Spider, do, in fact, share many traits associated with urban Appalachians, but their differences are vivid and at least as important as their similarities. One can even come to enjoy T. J.'s gruff honesty.

The Subjects' Choices

The choices made by the subjects, within the limits of that one gallery, shed a good deal of light on their ways of responding to paintings. What they picked out for discussion were realistic paintings of very familiar subjects. Fergie chose Edward Hopper's Street Scene, a quiet residential cityscape bathed in light, but with no visible human activity. Spider chose the photographic Portrait of a Tree that T. J. had commented on, and T. J. chose a portrait of a pensive, or perhaps sad, little girl, Patience Serious by Robert Henri. All three paintings are similar in subject and method to contemporary popular art, though obviously of much higher quality. The most painterly of the three, the Henri, was, interestingly enough, chosen by T. J., apparently for its emotional content as much as for its subject or technique. He did express, in his way, admiration for the brushwork, which is a bit reminiscent of Franz Hals. "It looks impossible," was his evaluation. He used exactly that phrase again in another phase of the study when confronted with the exquisitely detailed brushwork of a Van Dyck portrait.

All three subjects volunteered remarks that pointed to familiar subject matter as a criterion for their choice. Fergie said that Hopper's New England street looked like Lower Price Hill "in the old days," before the neighborhood had begun to decay. He clearly enjoyed the nice old neighborhood quality depicted in the painting, a quality that is being restored in a number of sections in Cincinnati, including Price Hill. Spider's choice of a tree turning red in the autumn sun reminded him of Pine Knot, Kentucky, one of his favorite down-home haunts. T. J. said that the little girl in the Henri reminded him of his younger sister.

Need Fulfillment

These expressions of familiarity connected also with various personal needs that could be inferred either from direct statements of the subjects or from their particular situation. Fergie's interest in urban restoration was clear, given his employment with a contractor doing restoration work in Lower Price Hill. And, interestingly enough, he made several positive references to the peaceful quality of the street in the painting, indicating desires that go beyond his heavy metal tastes for excruciatingly high levels of sensory input. In the interview, he mentioned two fashionable gaslight areas of Cincinnati--Hyde Park and Clifton--as places where he would like to live. Neither of the other two subjects expressed such desires. Spider merely wanted to move farther west to a better, but by no means fashionable, part of town, and T. J. expressed satisfaction with where he was. T. J. lives in comfortable circumstances in one of the rehabilitated apartment buildings and has sufficient spending money. During the interview, he was wearing designer jeans and an Izod Lacoste shirt.

In his interview, and in his discussion of Parish's tree, Spider made repeated references to the country and his enjoyment of its peace and quiet. He also spoke once of the tree as being "full of life," meaning wildlife. This was more an insightful guess than a perception, since there is no animal life of any kind depicted in the painting. There are, though, deep shadows in and under the tree that could easily suggest refuge for numerous birds and small animals, especially to an animal lover such as Spider. One of his stated ambitions is to become involved with some program that would lead him into animal work.

The most complex need-satisfaction was expressed by T. J. It is surprising that he chose the emotion-laden portrait of a little girl from the collection, given his rather harsh, macho veneer, but his reaction was, "I took to it right away." Along with his admiration for the technique, he expressed considerable emotional response. "Sad," "pitiful," "like she just got whupped, or something," were his terms. This emotional responsiveness could be connected with his life at the time of the study. He was in trouble with the law, having been convicted of stealing audio equipment from cars, and he had recently broken up with a girl firend. It is my guess that he may have been projecting into the painting some sadness that his rather conventionalized masculinity would not allow him to express openly. Certainly, the notion of purging emotion through art is not a new one, at least to those familiar with Aristotle's Poetics, but to see it suggested so directly in T. J.'s responses raises the interesting question of how common such a phenomenon might be, even among relatively unsophisticated people.

Responses to Craft and Form

Besides these responses, the subjects all seemed to have a particular interest in the technical craft of the paintings. From the context of the study as a whole, it is apparent that this comes from two distinct sources. First, there is a traditional respect for craft in Appalachia, which the subjects shared, despite their dislike of the rather stereotyped uses to which it is often put. At the Appalachian Festival, all the subjects responded to technical mastery of the media being used, provided the technique was accompanied with imagination. They all expressed high respect, which I shared, for the memorial display of works by the late Chester Cornett, a well-known local furniture-maker. In a mainstream gallery, his work would have been characterized as fantasy furniture. It featured four-legged rockers, heroically proportioned chairs and cradles, and such, but it also displayed a fine command of the traditional techniques of the Southern Highlands: pegged joints, hand-carved ornaments, and fine, symmetrical caning. Fergie, especially, expressed a respect for the integrity of Cornett's craft, contemptuously dismissing a cradle held together with ordinary stove bolts: "This doesn't belong here." By contrast, he enthusiastically admired the hand-carved pegs holding a large chair together: "He was trying to achieve something with that."

To this background has been added an appreciation of technical command stemming from their own struggles with painting in their art classes. In the museum, they all gave due attention to brushwork, not only in the paintings chosen for the study but in others that caught their attention as well. I have already commented on their admiration of the photographic realism of several of the painters in Room 80.

On the other hand, their ability to perceive, or at least comment on, less technical aspects was severely limited. Questions posed on formal qualities did not elicit very sophisticated answers. When asked about such things as shape, line, design, or perspective, they answered with noncommittal evaluations: "It's good," "It's okay," "I like it." This outcome is neither surprising nor particularly distressing. It would appear that their struggles in their own art classes with simply getting the paint to go on the surface with the intended effect were sufficient problems for them at this stage of their development. Their design sense is almost completely at the intuitive level, and they remain naive when asked to verbalize about it. It is worth noting that many experienced professional painters are often unwilling, and sometimes even unable, to discuss such matters. The subjects' monosyllabic responses should not be taken as symptomatic of lack of interest or poor training in art, but rather as an indication of a particular stage of their development. In fact, all three youths enjoyed the museum experience, and all three spontaneously expressed a desire to return to the museum.

Some Implications

While I was analyzing the subjects' responses to the paintings, it occurred to me that, except of a few naive remarks such as "It don't look like a painting," almost everything they said could as easily have been said by a much more experienced individual. Each focused on his chosen painting's distinctive quality: the glowing light and planes of color of the Hopper, the photographic realism of the Parrish, and the emotional evocativeness of the Henri. Because of their levels of development, they had less to say than an artist or connoisseur would about form and design, but what they did have to say about technique and feeling was accurate and perceptive. Similarly, their range of stylistic tolerance was narrower than a more experienced person's might be, although certainly many art sophisticates display a ready willingness to denigrate any painting that does not fall within the currently fashionable style. They did not respond to the primitive, the abstract, or cubist styles nor to the romantic sculptures. I found myself disagreeing with most of their negative valuations of the paintings in the collection, but not with their remarks about the paintings they chose to discuss. It would appear that their lack of enthusiasm for many of the paintings came simply from the fact that they had not experienced these styles sufficiently. They chose basically realistic works that are closer to the popular art they are familiar with and that connect, through literal and emotional content, with their interests and needs. Within the limits of their stage of development, they responded in ways that are not noticeably different from those of one experienced in art.

One of the most important theoretical bases for this study was Herbert Gans' conceptualization of public tastes, their interactions and their implications for art education. (Gans, 1974). Of particular interest is Gans' statement:

> American society should pursue policies that would maximize educational and other opportunities for all so as to permit everyone to choose from higher taste cultures. (p. 128)

The operative word, in the context of this study is "choose." I am convinced that the permission to choose, even from a very narrow range, a painting to discuss had a positive effect on the subjects' willingness to participate fully and on the validity of their verbal responses. In the design of an art appreciation program, it would appear that the tactic of giving a range of choices, rather than always choosing for students, could lead to both a greater motivation and a greater sense of mastery from encountering works about which students could find something valid to say.

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Issues Posed by the Study of Folk Art in Art Education

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Abstract

The study of folk art processes and products reveals several issues concerning the study of art and our educational methodologies. This paper will address the following issues and how they relate to the field of art education: (a) the learning process which takes place in folk art settings and the notion of the folk artist as educator; (b) aesthetics, art criticism, and art history from the folk artist's perspective; (c) the many functions of art and the value of one function over another in our society; and (d) the existence of elitism in folk art categorization by academics.

In 1975, I taught art in the Women's Section of the Milwaukee, Wisconsin, County Jail. Most of my students, younger adults who lacked formal education, were members of minority groups. Nearly every inmate had lived a life of poverty. Although I had previously taught in schools with large Black populations, this experience made me keenly aware of the differences between my aesthetic preferences and those of my students. The nature of the setting dictated that I find ways to respect their aesthetic choices and allow them to define, redefine, and expand those choices. When I left Wisconsin to work on my doctorate, I did so with the intention of finding ways to help art educators become more sensitive to the aesthetic preferences of groups from different cultural backgrounds and to incorporate those aesthetics into the classroom with dignity. I found that the best route for accomplishing these goals was to study the art of folk groups (usually ethnic, occupational, regional, and/or religious).

Since that time, I have studied folk art intensely. Understanding folk art processes raises certain issues about how we define and approach art and art education. Although I discuss four areas of concern in this paper, these categories are not separate and distinct entities. They each interact in the way in which they reveal concerns for our field and suggest its fluid boundaries. Art education cannot be separated from the concerns and processes of daily life any more than can art. The areas of concern in relation to folk art as it affects our understanding of art education are as follow: (a) the learning process; (b) aesthetics, art criticism, and art history; (c) functions of art; and (d) elitism and folk art categories.

Learning Process

Folk art is alive and well; it is being created in every state in our nation. It is dynamic, with some forms changing more than others. Although some forms of folk art may have died out, like all other types of art, many folk art forms have been replenished by new techniques, tools, and subject matter. Loggers are beginning to explore the process of carving with chain saws in place of pocket knives and rug hooking might now be done on canvas rather than on a burlap sack (field notes, Maryan Morin-Jones, Oregon Arts Commission, 1980). Federal and state laws have drastically affected many folk group practices, yet they have not stopped folk artists from continuing to develop new ways of doing things or from patiently waiting and remembering. For example, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, in the interest of assimilation, attempted to discourage all manifestations of Indian culture. Although Native American art at that time diminished greatly, it is now experiencing a significant revival (Rubinstein, 1982). However, some materials, such as bird feathers and seal and caribou hides that are used to make Eskimo dolls are still subject to government restrictions (Fair, 1982). Grasses used to make traditional baskets in Oregon and California have been destroyed in order to suppress fires (Toelken, 1983). These few examples show how folk arts as traditionally practiced have been discouraged in the United States. Today, with limited funding and support from the fine art world and academically trained art educators, folk art preservation groups are increasing and state arts councils and historical societies are attempting to recognize, encourage, and preserve the folk arts.

Folk art continues to be taught, practiced, and appreciated in communities throughout the country despite laws, prejudices, and minimal bureaucratic support. Generally, folk artists do not write formal curricula, attend educational conventions, compare and contrast art criticism methodologies, or worry about losing their jobs as educators. In conjunction with their roles as mothers, fathers, grandparents, farmers, lawyers, dentists, and loggers, however, they do make art and engage in teaching activities encompassing aesthetics, art criticism, and art history, as well as formal studio production. My exploration into the folk art process, from books and articles, films, videos, and oral histories, has presented me with the art work of hundreds of folk artists who informally pass on knowledge about their art to groups of willing students. Without an active national organization, massive funding, large educational institutions, or years of art education training from academic establishments, they are doing what we academically trained, somewhat organized, and more heavily funded art educators are also attempting to do.

The question arises as to whether art educators should perhaps be asking folk artists for help. At the very least, should not we recognize in our settings what they, the quilters, chain carvers, lacemakers, traditional boat builders, and coverlet weavers, are doing? Is it wise for the academically trained educator to be oblivious to these natural processes of artistic creativity which are so firmly entrenched and intensely appreciated, and which convey a sense of family and community history and cultural values? Many seem to look only to the major museums and galleries for art and to university art educators for methodology, neglecting the wealth of expertise and aesthetic communication which already exists in our backyards and in small communities across the nation and the world. Has there not been too much faith placed in the "ivory towers" and "gallery walls"?

Aesthetics, Art Criticism and Art History

In June, 1984, I was introduced to a young Black furniture refinisher, John Mason, from Chapel Hill, North Carolina. I had heard about him from a friend, and I wanted to write about the sense of community identity his work gave him, the memories he had of his father, who was his teacher, and the aesthetics involved in his creative processes. John's high school education cannot be given much credit for his aesthetic preferences, his deep understanding of wood, or the thinking processes of the craftsperson. His father, a basketmaker, shoemaker, and woodworker, who worked at home because of a polio disability, was the teacher who most invoked John's great sense of purpose and aesthetic understanding. I soon realized that I could not write about John and do him justice. He did not need an academically trained art educator to help him speak about his work or to understand its function in his community. I returned to his shop and community during the summer of 1985 with a video crew, a loosely written script, and a humbled sense of myself as a knowledgeable art educator.

It was not John Mason's furniture which first caught my eye. I still cannot readily tell one wood from the next. But he taught me about old craftspeople, the smell of wood, the feel of working on it, the texture of a smoothly finished piece, and how to attend to the color of natural wood. I began to look at wood and refinishing furniture differently. Initially, I thought making new furniture was more creative, somehow more artistic than refinishing old pieces. Now I realize that, for John, it is getting into the mind of the old craftsperson that is exhilarating.

Something similar occurred when I began to study the buckaroo (cowboy) art of eastern Oregon. Previously, saddles, bridles, and large silver belt buckles had elicited little more from me than indifference. But as I became more familiar with the area, buckaroo folklore, and the uses of such art (status, identity, pride, functionalism), I saw it in an entirely different light.

None of these revelations about aesthetic response should be surprising. Many writers have discussed how aesthetics are a part of formally and informally learned, cultural, and social processes (Chalmers, 1981; Hamblen, 1984). When art can be understood in its social and cultural context, one can more fully appreciate its formal elements, its function, and its meaning. In writing about the Eskimos of the Bering Straits during the 1880s, Edward W. Nelson (Olmart, 1982) relates a tale about an elderly storyteller who listened to some organ music for the first time. The old man said he did not understand what the noise said and that the sounds were confusing to his ears. He preferred to listen to the drum singing in the kashim because he understood it.

Many art educators are changing the ways students are introduced to art on museum walls, acknowledging the fact that, for many, these forms will appear strange until historical information, critical dialogue, and aesthetic literacy provide perspectives. Many believe that these awarenesses will lead to a broadened range of aesthetic responses. If art educators take the time to teach about museum art and to listen to the criticism of academically trained critics, why not also attend to the contextual dimensions and criticism of the saddlemaker, the furniture refinisher, the lacemaker, and others in the community who use and appreciate their own art forms? Can we be certain that the educational background of one critic is better than another? Will the words of the academically trained critic speak more clearly or with more meaning to a group of students than the folk art critic? If our students can extend themselves to enjoy the academic approaches to aesthetics, criticism, and art historical processes, then too, cannot "professional" art educators who have university training in similar language systems and research methodologies extend their choices and preferences by listening to the words and world views of the traditional basketmaker from rural Mississippi, or the Navajo weaver? Do we limit ourselves by conversing with only one group of people? There is nothing inherently wrong with promoting the culture of academics. But many of our students have been brought up in, and will return to, a world removed from the fine arts museum and gallery art scene and from the current values and practices of academia. They deserve choices for aesthetic appreciation that relate to a wide variety of meaningful environments. Providing these choices can only enhance their aesthetic development as well as the development of the academic world.

Functions of Art

Academically trained art educators tend to look at art works deemed worthy of our attention by the art establishment that consists primarily of museum administrators, wealthy patrons, established art critics, and university scholars. Most contemporary art seems to be based on two main ideas: the "I-did-it-first" syndrome, which Lucy Lippard (1984) calls blatantly classist; and the "art for art's sake" category, which Radar and Jessup (1976) say isolates art from everyday life and represents aesthetic preferences of an increasingly smaller audience. There is nothing wrong with having art function for a select group of people in this manner, and if it is the innovative that evokes an aesthetic response, then the major contemporary art museums are the places to go.

However, the study of folk art evokes an awareness that art has different functions for various individuals in order to be appreciated. People have varying aesthetic needs and often attend to different aspects in art objects; thus, aesthetic responses vary. The recognition and support for the different functions of art are ways of supporting cultural pluralism in our society. To choose one or two functions of art as more worthwhile is to belittle the aesthetic choices, world views, and values of many minority group members, women, and others in our society. Some examples from folk art documentation will clarify this point by stressing functions of art other than innovation or the art for art's sake idea.

Elijah Pierce, a Black relief sculptor born in Mississippi, who lived in Columbus, Ohio, said "My carvings look nice. . .but if they don't have a story behind them, what's the use of them? Every piece of work I carve is a message, a sermon" (Livingston & Beardsley, 1982, p. 120). For Pierce, his art communicates a message and gives his viewers direction.

Carpenter (1971) writes about how, for the Eskimos, the process of creating art was more expressive of their world view than the finished object. The act was a way of reaffirming life's values. "It is a ritual of discovery by which patterns of nature and of human nature are revealed by man" (p. 163). When the artist reveals form in a universe that is formless, he or she has brought beauty into consciousness (Carpenter, 1961). Although all art expresses the world view of the artist, for Eskimos the process of reaffirming their perception of the universe was central to the function of making art. The spiritual and physical necessity of securing food, shelter, and clothing was given form in the creation of their art.

For one midwest chain carver who had experienced job dissatisfaction, carving a chain from one piece of wood gave him the psychological prestige he needed (Bronner, 1985). This same carver also said that carving was therapeutic for him when his wife died and he was faced with loneliness. Another carver said that making chains released his mind from his problems. Many artists, especially women, talk about the pleasure they gain from creating art that is personal, not made for large audiences, which speaks quietly to them, their families, or close friends (Lippard, 1976).

The functions of telling a story, relating a message, expressing a world view, giving purpose to an individual, or creating a therapeutic environment can apply to artists who strive for innovation and follow the art-for-art's-sake ideology. But these functions have not been viewed as worthwhile or relevant by the establishment art world. When I talk to a folk artist or a folk art appreciator and see the emotion brought about by a traditional quilt pattern, a piece of bobbin lace, or a chain carving, or when I listen to a Hungarian speak about the role embroidery plays in her life, I cannot say that his or her priorities or judgments are invalid, misplaced, or inconsequential. Just as I would hope that someday these people might also experience Motherwell, O'Keefe, and Mondrian, and come to appreciate the aesthetic experience which may come from the art-for-art's sake approach, I would also hope that regular patrons of the Museum of Modern Art might take the time to understand the aesthetic process of Elijah Pierce, Willie Seaweed, and Clementine Hunter, and the way their art functions in their respective communities.

Do academically trained art educators put too much, almost exclusive, faith in the idea of creativity as innovation (Congdon, 1984)? The function of art as something removed from society and day-to-day living may have its place in some groups, and does deserve recognition, analysis, and study, but should it be the only approach we take to art's function in society? If we study contemporary art only as innovation and put it above the day-to-day processes of human interactions and needs, do we not set up one person's assessment of the worth of an art object over another's? Who can say whether innovation in art (which may extend one's way of looking at and understanding the world) is more important than an art work which gives one a sense of identity (a family quilt), tells a story (a carved walking cane), or holds a cowboy on his horse (an intricately carved saddle). Should one group of critics or art institutions attempt to set functional priorities in the visual arts for an entire population?

Elitism and folk Art Categorization

Since the so-called "discovery" of American folk art at the beginning of this century, defining the category of folk art has created difficulties among various university and public groups. Some scholars say it is innovative; others maintain it is traditional. Some say folk artists are isolated loners; others are convinced they are members of folk groups and their art is representative of the group's world views and values. Some collectors propose that folk art can be easily appreciated apart from its context; others cringe at this suggestion. Many believe that folk art is dead or dying; others insist it is flourishing. Some claim that folk artists are rural, isolated, uneducated people; their counterparts conclude that all people belong to folk groups and that folk artists can come from any economic or educational background.

Categorization can become problematic. In the travels of William Least Heat Moon (1982), he became aware of the relativeness of what constitutes West in our country:

> I crossed into Texas. I've heard Americans debate where the West begins: Texans say the Brazas River; in St. Louis it's the Mississippi, and they built a very expensive "Gateway Arch" to prove it; Philadelphians say the Alleghenies, in Brooklyn it's the Hudson; and on Beacon Hill the backside of the Common. But of course, the true West begins with the western state line of Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri, Iowa, and Minnesota. . . . I'm an authority because my family lives two hundred feet from where this line passes through Kansas City. (p. 135)

Indeed, categorization of the West, or of folk art, depends on one's experiences and on certain available information as well as to which aspects of a definition one attends. Limiting ourselves to one definition of where the West begins or what constitutes folk art would be most helpful in communicating with others, but surely the experiences and the processes of coming to a definition are more useful in understanding human behavior and therefore more intriguing than the final proclamation. Grappling with these processes constitutes the real learning experience and poses more important questions. We are asking, for example, not what is folk art, but what it is we value in the art object, in the art process, or in the artist that makes one art experience different from another.

Wide discrepancies in the definition of what is folk art have made it difficult for folk art enthusiasts to use each other's research, participate cooperatively in conventions, and utilize funding in the name of the art which is called folk. Fortunately, art educators need not be too concerned with having a single definition of folk art in order to study it; many of us believe that any art which evokes aesthetic response is worthy of attention. What we can gain from the active dialogue on definitions is an analysis of the way in which folk art has been studied, appreciated, and critiqued. We can then apply those processes which are useful to all art forms (Congdon, 1983).

The tendency is to categorize the art of ethnic group members, rural, economically poor, and nonacademically trained artists as folk art (even while disclaiming the criteria for categorization) and the work of those who studied in art schools as fine art. The unfortunate unspoken policy in the art world is that fine art is better than folk art. Because of this strong tendency, academically trained art educators seldom look at folk art objects as worthy of study in and of themselves (Schellin, 1973).

Many folk artists have created art works which explore the visual ideas that have made some fine artists famous. In 1942, Sidney Janis, a folk art collector, wrote about the folk artist:

> Knowing nothing of Cubism, he may paint a picture in which a circulating viewpoint is used, or one that is counterpoised like a cubist painting. Knowing nothing of Surrealism, he may create enigmatic surface textures, use literary ideas and fantasies that are closely akin to Surrealism. Knowing nothing of Freud, he may undesignedly employ symbols similar to those Dali uses with specific intent. (p. 10)

Janis's definition of folk art is that which is made by the nonacademically trained artist. His correlation between the two art categories gives us much to think about in terms of the values employed in art judgments that set one art work above another and how classism and the political art world connections might influence us.

If, as many already do, we learn to value perspectives toward art which are often studied in conjunction with that which has been called folk art, such as tradition, community and individual identity, sense of place, communication with the values and symbolic system of a small or different groups of people, the effect may be far reaching. First, our goals of cultural pluralism may be enhanced by accepting, appreciating, and understanding diverse groups of people. Second, we may be encouraged to value folk art (often the art form which speaks most readily to many of our students). And third, the influence of the classist, elitist system which now exists may be minimized. Goals for the democratization of arts should not be limited to bringing the fine arts to the ghettos and rural areas of our country; it should equally involve recognizing, valuing, and sharing quality art from suburban kitchen countertops, urban street corners, and dormitory rooms.

In our country, there is little doubt that art history and aesthetic choices are controlled by a select group of people from similar educational and cultural backgrounds. Art education, however, should speak to every child and adult from every conceivable background. In order to do justice to our students, we must respect the art forms which communicate to them from their own cultural context, and they must be given more information with which they can make informed, intelligent choices in the future.

Conclusion

In summary, my studies in folk art have shown that if we are committed to cultural pluralism in art education, we must do more than just include the ethnic arts in our curricula. We must, as Nadaner (1984) points out, recognize many more world views than those represented by only one or two groups of people. We should become aware of the many forms in which art education takes place, so that we can preserve and expand pluralistic cultural values. We need to broaden the choices available for aesthetic responses, art criticism, and art history. We must allow for and respect the many functions which art has in our society. We need to begin questioning how categorization of art forms occurs. The kinds of prejudices and discriminatory values inherent in creating boundaries between art categories needs to be examined, as well as which kinds of evaluatory guidelines might be useful in analyzing all art forms.

Like many art educators, I make suggestions which move the boundaries of the field of art education outward at a time when many others are calling for more definition and unification. Art education is not just a school activity, nor are aesthetic responses to art relegated only to museum experiences. To see it as such shuts out large segments of our population. Art education must deal with social concerns in its content (Beyer, 1984) and with cultural pluralism in its methodology (Chalmers, 1984).

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Children's Views on Art in the Primary Grades, K-3

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Abstract

This study examined some of the kinds of knowledge that primary students have regarding art. Approximately one hundred students participated in the study. The researcher visited their classrooms, sat among them, and interviewed them as they did their art work. Although the students appeared to have an accurate grasp of the methods for working with art media, they were not very knowledgeable about ways to judge art. At all grade levels, the students' knowledge was somewhat inconsistent and not articulated very well. The students exhibited both unique meanings and socially shared meanings in their discourse and confirmed the importance of art teachers as agents of socialization in the process of learning about art. What students come to know about art requires the teaching of organized and comprehensive concepts.

A major accomplishment of childhood is the acquisition of some of the socio-cultural knowledge of the society into which one is born. This is facilitated through social interaction or the process of socialization. A major agency for socialization and the transmission of socio-cultural knowledge is the school where children have formal encounters with the cognitive symbols that comprise knowledge and encode various subjects.

One of the purposes of this study was to use the school as a setting to examine some of the kinds of socio-cultural knowledge that primary students have acquired about art. A second purpose was to illuminate how the knowledge is conceived and framed. A third purpose was to examine some of the cultural assumptions embedded in the students' knowledge.

Basic questions pursued in the study were: What is art? What do you do in art? Why do you do art? What is an artist? Are art teachers artists? How do you make what you're doing? Where do you see art? How can you tell if art is good or bad or pretty?

The perspective taken in this study is derived from symbolic interactionism and phenomenological sociology. One of the points central to this perspective is that human beings are able to shape experience with meaning. According to Brown (1977) and Lakoff and Johnson (1980), human experience and thought is given form through metaphor. Consequently, we can create highly symbolic worlds wherein we situate our daily activities. In anthropology, these symbolic worlds are termed culture (Bidney, 1973). Yet, all of human experience is not predetermined by culture. Each individual is able to create and frame his or her own personally meaningful experience. Culture, however, does provide an individual with coordinates of meaning and frames of reference that one needs to know in order to adequately participate in social life. Berger and Luckmann (1966) describe the relationship between society, culture, and the individual as a dialectical process. Scribner (1985) takes a related approach.

A key to learning about the symbolic structures of human experience is language. Language is the major vehicle by which human thought and experience are given form and meaning and by which they can be shared. Language provides a ready-made frame of reference or template for interpreting individual thought and experience (Schutz and Luckmann, 1973). Through language, children take on the socio-cultural knowledge created by their predecessors in a taken-for-granted way. What is at issue here is the interface between society and the individual. Within this interface, a great deal of knowledge can be assimilated, constructed, and internalized by a person without rethinking it or examining it.

Method

This study was both descriptive and interpretive; it involved participant-observation and interviewing. The methodology used was phenomenological. Phenomenology is a way to inspect the intentional structures of human consciousness and is especially appropriate to the study of culture and social knowledge (Luckmann, 1978). Phenomenological method calls for two procedures: 1) a description of the contents of consciousness, and 2) an analysis of the contents from a reflexive or critical stance. In this study, the interviews proceeded mainly in an unstructured manner to allow the researcher to take advantage of any line of thought which emerged during dialogue. The interviews were taped and later transcribed, collated, summarized, and analyzed.

Data Base

Students in kindergarten through third grade participated in the study which took place in live classroom situations. The exact number of participants is difficult to determine because many students offered information during someone else's response. The approximate numbers of students were 14 from kindergarten, 14 from grade one, 21 from grade two and 44 from grade three. The students attended nine elementary schools which were visited during two years of student teaching supervision. Not every student, class, or grade participated in the study due to the researcher's schedule, student teacher placements, class length, and the accessibility to and willingness of students.

Results

This section of the paper summarizes the ways that the students' knowledge is conceived and framed, and examines some of the cultural assumptions embedded in the students' knowledge. The focus here is upon how art is typically thought about or expressed by these students in the primary grades, and what some of the socially-based frames of reference in this thinking imply.

Summary of Knowledge

The concept of art in the primary grades in this study was framed primarily from an objective stance. Art is specific objects such as paintings, drawings, and projects. It is an activity and it is a place or time for working or making things. Particularly prominent in the students' conception of art is the term, stuff.

What one does in art was conceived in terms of activities that are typically engaged in by artists and presented to children in the primary grades. The students painted, drew, made constructions, planned designs, or worked in clay. As observed by the researcher, these activities resulted in the production of objects like Mother's Day cards, Christmas cards, illustrations of an event in the story of the three bears, animal pictures, books about spring, stained glass windows, pictures of Santa Claus, portraits, styrofoam sculptures, teapots, and ashtrays. Art is done in the primary grades for the following reasons: celebrating holidays, making gifts for the family, beautifying the school, enjoyment and fun, learning things that adults know, learning to listen, doing what teachers want, to get better at art, using the art room, for a profession or hobby, and a way to fill time.

Kindergarten and first grade students emphasized external forces as important reasons for doing art whereas the second and third grade students emphasized learning as a reason for doing art. Some unique framings did occur. A kindergarten student talked about art in terms of giving a piece (not peace) of mind when you grow up, a third grade student offered that art is making things that you imagine, and another third grade student said that art was experiments. The children's responses to the questions, what artists did and who were artists, revealed both unique and socialized concepts and frames of reference.

Artists do paintings, draw pictures good, draw buildings and houses, design, make things and stuff, take pictures, make pictures of people and planes, make faces out of clay, put stuff in books, and draw pictures without rulers. They can be teachers and help you make stuff. Artists try to get famous, win rewards (not awards) for their work, get ideas in museums, and make things that don't make sense.

Artists do these things to decorate their homes, to make things look pretty, to do work, to make money, to put art in museums, for a hobby, for fun, for a living, to fill their spare time, and the enjoyment of working with a specific medium. There are different kinds of artists, too. There are: explore artists, clothes artists, wood artists, clay artists, architects, and makers of cars. Typically, parents, neighbors, and teachers provided models of an artist. Other children were also identifiable as artists. One student mentioned that Leonardo DaVinci was a good drawer.

Art teachers can, sometimes, be considered as artists. They don't necessarily have to be one in order to teach art. Typically, art teachers do a lot of art, make stuff, hand out stuff, draw, tell you what to do, teach you art, show pictures, and give you ideas. The results revealed that the children were familiar with typical media such as crayon, pencil, toothpicks, clay, and paint. Concepts about process were framed, for the most part, in culturally appropriate ways. Painting is done with a brush that has bristles and working with toothpicks to construct a sculpture requires that you stick them in styrofoam, glue, or cardboard. For crayon etchings or scratch-it pictures, one has to press hard with the crayons, and then paint over the crayon with black. When the paint is dry, an image can be scraped into the surface. Some of the students knew that clay can be formed into ashtrays, teapots, pots, or anything that you want. They also knew some of the proper techniques for working with clay. Their knowledge of the firing process wasn't accurate, however.

The responses to where art can be seen came mostly from the third grade. The students said that art can typically be seen all over in the city, in museums, on the school walls, in one's home, in picture stores, in the art room, in the planetarium, and in the library.

The questions about what makes art good, bad, or pretty revealed a diversity of concepts. Art can just be good. It can be good if it is perfect or looks real, if the person making it works hard or considers the way it should be done, and if one likes it or people stare at it because it is unusual. Also, if the person making it did not use a ruler, draw with a pencil, but painted directly, and the work is neat and not messed up, it can be thought of as good. Further, artists themselves determine if something is good as do others who say that it is. Something is good if it is in a museum. What is more, an expert such as a scientist can be asked to determine what is good art.

Art is bad if it is sloppy or messy, the colors are not right, nobody looks at it, somebody says it is bad, the person looking at it does not like it, it looks bad, or if it has erasing marks all over it. Scribbles are not good nor is putting a lot of stuff all over the art work.

Art is pretty when a person does his or her best or if the work has different colors. A person looking at it can tell if it is pretty. A design with flowers is pretty and a design with leaves and water might be. Several students in the third grade noted that some persons, like artists, experts, or scientists, are more qualified than others to comment about the worth of art objects.

Cultural Assumptions

Cultural assumptions are concepts and meanings that underlie or are embedded in the shared knowledge of a society. They are also generally taken for granted. Such concepts are not likely to be thought about critically in terms of their origin, meaning, and implications for understanding a phenomenon.

Within the students' knowledge about art, there were many cultural assumptions. Only four of them that the researcher considered to be problematic will be discussed. These are: 1) art is mostly making stuff for fun, decoration, or gifts; 2) artists are good drawers or painters who do art for fame, money, or fun; 3) art is in museums or on the walls; and, 4) good art is neat and readily determined through looking.

The first of these--thinking of art as an activity involving the making of stuff for fun, decoration, or gifts--can be related to the ideas of art as process of making objects and art as means of self expression through media manipulation which have been highly prized by the advocates of child-centered education. This conceptualization is a somewhat misleading and dysfunctional guide to understanding the art world. Artists and other persons professionally involved with art in our society talk about it, theorize about it, study it, and make judgments about it. Art entails cognitive activity and purposeful thinking of various kinds. For example, neither impressionism nor minimal art can be adequately comprehended from a process frame of reference. This is not to say that children ought to understand impressionism or minimal art, but to suggest that perhaps they ought to know that thinking inspires the making of art.

The framing of art as fun calls attention to the aspect of enjoyment either because art is an inherently pleasurable activity or contributes to a pleasant environment when it is displayed. These meanings were emphasized during the Aesthetic Movement that was popular around the turn of the century. They also provide some of the theory upon which modern art is based. Art as just plain fun, though, serves little purpose in understanding art.

While the concept of gift-giving and bringing school work home for parents to see may be appropriate in the context of celebration, ritual, and reinforcing values, it is not useful information about art. Gift giving in the art world is generally confined to the giving of collections to art museums. It is not clear how the notion of art as gift-giving in the primary grades would contribute to an understanding of fine art as it is perceived in our society.

Undoubtedly, the phrase "making stuff" is descriptive of what goes on in art, but it is neither articulate nor knowledgeable. Referring specifically to ceramics, sculpture, or printmaking is far more adequate and does not seem to be beyond the ability of primary students.

The second assumption--artists are good drawers or painters who do art for fame, money, or fun--has a number of concepts embedded within it. There is the notion that skill and ability is required of an artist. There is the idea that drawing and painting are preferred art forms, and the conception that if artists are skillful enough, they can become well-known and admired. These meanings are reminiscent of those applied to artists during the time when training in the academy was popular. The framing of experience in regard to artists at that time was in terms of standards of performance by which artists and their works could be given acclaim. Such meanings in themselves are not helpful in understanding art if the sources for these ideas are never made known to the students and remain at a taken-for-granted level.

The money and fun concepts are reflective of economic and aesthetic considerations also rooted in the nineteenth century. Artists became purveyors of creative works embodying significant form. This frame of reference does not adequately address problems and issues in art today.

The third concept--art is in museums or on walls--has overtones of the fine arts and the practice of painting in particular. It holds that art is only visible in, and confined to, specific objects in specific places. In part, such a conception can be derived from the students' own school art activities; they, oftentimes, paint pictures and hang them up for display. This concept does not allow for some of the current thinking about art. From this frame of reference, it would be difficult to comprehend phenomena such as "Spiral Jetty" or "Running Fence." Furthermore, from this frame of reference, art lacks a broad perspective that might include an understanding of the built environment and material culture in general. By framing art in such a narrow way, children become intellectually separated from most of the art within their own culture.

The fourth concept--good art is neat and readily determined through looking--relates to a number of notions. One holds that there are standards by which one can evaluate art works; another is the idea that everyone ought to be able to understand art without relying on someone else to explain it. There are traces here of a democratic approach to art and a kind of empiricism wherein knowledge can be arrived at through visible evidence. The Arts and Crafts Movement contributed to the conception that art is for everyone, and the spread of science as a way to understand the workings of the natural world is perhaps the root of knowing through looking. Insofar as these meanings are used to comprehend art work in the late twentieth century, they would not provide very reliable knowledge. Standards for evaluating art, other than formalism, have been in flux, and contemplating Richard Estes' or Duane Hanson's work, for example, without the benefit of knowing about photo-realism or environments leads to, at best, only a simplistic understanding of these artists' works. More adequate conceptual tools need to be shared with the children.

Conclusions

In this study, it is proposed that students' comments indicate that teachers are instrumental in socializing them to art knowledge. Social interaction with other students also leads to the formulation, support, negotiation, and availability of meanings that come to be attached to art experiences.

The image of art presented by the primary students in this study appears as bits and pieces of knowledge that are, as Schutz (1970) noted about social knowledge in general, somewhat incoherent, inconsistent, and only partially clear. The language used by the students to express art knowledge is very generalized, nonspecific and not very articulated. Much of the knowledge that the children have is taken-for-granted as evidenced by the large number of "I don't know" responses when asked why something was so. Their knowledge was also distributed unevenly. Some students appeared to have clearer conceptions of art, artists, and so on, than others. Both personal and shared knowledge was in evidence. In the different categories of questions, it can be noted that technical knowledge about working with a medium was the clearest and most socialized. The fuzziest and least credible knowledge was that dealing with art evaluations. Overall, it was apparent that these students have internalized some parts of the socially available concepts about art held by the culture in general. If our mission as art teachers is to help students become more knowledgeable about art, we ought to give considerable thought to the content of what we teach and to the processes we use to extend children's frames of reference regarding art.

Notes

1. This study was supported in part by a faculty research fellowship, SUNY Research Foundation.

2. A version of this paper was reported at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association in New York City, 1982.

3. Copies of the taped interviews with the children are available upon request from Nancy R. Johnson, Art Department, Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana 47306.

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Seeing Eye to I: Perceptual Development and Sense of Self

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Abstract

This paper is a commentary on current views of early development in art and argues for a theory which emphasizes a more active role of the learner in the refinement of perceptual ability, particularly in drawing development. Independent perception is presented as a primary source of children's visual imagery; and inference and problem solving, rather than imitation, are seen to characterize the drawing process as well as to indicate proper methods of instruction. Discussion also considers the shift away from inquiry in this area.

How is drawing ability developed? How do the various psychological and cultural factors affecting development operate and interact? Are some of the variables more decisive? What are optimal conditions for drawing development?

Current writing in art education has generally shifted away from such concerns. These queries echo from the art education literature of two and three decades ago when Read, Lowenfeld, McFee, Arnheim, and others engaged in preliminary work in this area. Such developmental factors as sensory-motor coordination, perceptual acuity, cognition, technical skill acquisition, and cultural influence were identified, defined, and debated by these authors who approached the problem from various theoretical frameworks. For instance, McFee (1961), in her Perception-Delineation theory, summarized and catalogued various factors thought to be operative such as perception, psychological and cultural environment, intellectual-organizational skills, and transformation-communication skills, assigning each of these factors more or less equal weight. A more recent version of the theory (McFee & Degge, 1977) favors cultural and personal factors over cognitive developmental variables. Arnheim, alternatively, was less eclectic and far more critical of prior attempts to explain the genesis of drawing development, considering active, individual perception to be the primary factor.

In essence, this was art education's version of the nature-nurture controversy. This paper is an unabashed extension of that debate, focusing on the subject of drawing development. A conception of perceptual development as active, refined common sense (referred to here as Eye) is seen to be linked inextricably to development of a student's sense of self (I). A conception of the development of Eye and I is considered in terms of instructional conditions affecting the development of drawing ability.

A Shift from Theory to Practice

In recent years, the subject of early drawing development, once central to art education research, has been more or less set aside. Attention has shifted to discipline based curricula. To explain these changes, some would point to the recognition that artistic development entails more than the acquisition of drawing skills. Correspondingly, conceptions of the art curriculum have been expanded to include the study of art history, art appreciation, and aesthetics as well as art production. But despite these developments in the field, the shift has been away from theoretical concerns and toward curriculum implementation and instructional practice. It has been argued (Efland, 1964; Wieder, 1975) that the suspension of theory in a field of study can have dire consequences, such as a loss of means of assessing curricular recommendations, of verifying research findings, and of checking the directions of research efforts. What is at stake is the possibility of extending and refining the work of our predecessors. Any such cessation of critical inquiry limits theoretical advancement.

Eye/I and Drawing Development

One of the writers in the field today doing work in the area of drawing development in relation to art education theory is Brent Wilson (1984). His efforts have helped to keep alive the idea that pictorial imagery is indispensable to art education, and his work has presented an alternative to the shallow kind of formalism that has tended to dominate art education curricula and thus diminish its educational and social significance.

Wilson's view of drawing/artistic development emphasizes culture and denies the role of personal meaning and individual value. In "Children's Drawings in Egypt: Cultural Style Acquisition as Graphic Development" (1984), Wilson equivocates cultural assimilation with educational development. The term cultural style is used to refer to "aspects of style that one finds in the advertisements, how-to-draw books and illustrated [comic] books" (p. 14). His conception of graphic development is not one of individual achievement but as cultural residue--as fleeting fashion and fast-food recipe. Even the traditional references to schools of art such as Cubism or Impressionism, or references to such cultural geographic art styles as German Gothic and Ancient Egyptian are considered by Wilson to be unconnected to human perception, cognition, and affection (see note). The sense of style as personal idiom is absent. Contrary to Wilson's position of cultural determinism another position is that culture is itself rooted in the minds and works of individuals (Spindler, 1963).

To be sure, even in the freest of societies, many persons are inclined to follow the fashions and shift with the popular currents, merely making adaptations from popular conventions. But by contrast, Maxine Greene (1979) holds that "the activities of interpretation, the processes of sense making are our intentional activities, and that what is interpreted (or perceived, or understood) is...a function of our seeing, our being in the world" (p. 635). There are, after all, designers as well as those who simply follow the latest trends. And in a very basic educational sense, each and every one of us can be the designers and the creators of our lifestyles and characters. This self-making or self-expression requires the skill, the confidence, and the freedom to exercise critical choice, to selectively sort through our particular social environment and cultural legacy. This working one's way through the traditions and the folk-lore, casting out the superstitions and bad habits of thought, is what gives our lives personal meaning and a sense of direction.

An endless diversity of drawing approaches can range from simple, linear, cartoon narratives to intricate, richly textured, experientially based, sensual and expressive styles. Like painting, sculpture and other visual art forms, drawing involves design and composition as well as craftsmanship and style. Most significantly, though, like all human conceptual learning, drawing development is not based primarily on imitation or cultural assimilation, but rather upon the integration of percepts (Eye) and the assigning of personal meaning (I).

In his emphasis on the primacy of culture in educational development, Wilson (1984) speaks of the need to "overcome various intrinsic biases or initial preferences [for the sake of simplicity and clarity of meaning]" (p. 20). Yet such so-called biases are at the very core of human nature, and consist of the educational-biological efforts by persons to grasp and to make sense of the world. Indeed, as Wilson astutely notes, there may at times be "a tension between [an individual's] intrinsic biases or preferred forms and culturally preferred forms" (p. 22). This tension has long been a central feature of art, particularly forms of romantic art, which has pitted hostile forces against admirable persons, often called heroes, who dare to stand in defiance of convention, idols, fashions, and the like. Rather than take up sides in this ideological drama, the authors challenge the historical belief of adversity between individuals and society or between individuals and culture.

All persons own their ideas and images in the classical, liberal sense of self-ownership. That individuals are capable of developing and refining this self-property and thereby of taking pride of ownership is not a new theory. Putting the point as Jefferson, Paine, Locke, and other classical liberals have: by our very nature as human beings, all of us can be the owners of our ideas and our thought processes if we are free to choose our beliefs and truths on the basis of our understanding. Thus, when a child's perceptions, meanings, judgments, and choices are respected, the educational-psychological foundation is in place for pride of ownership.

The eighteenth century idea of individual rights based upon self-ownership and the nineteenth century idea that children are persons were truly iconoclastic ideas. These ideas contributed to the American revolution and, later, to an educational revolution called the child study movement. These revolutions continue today. Indeed, we see our efforts here as a part of that vigilance described by Thomas Jefferson as necessary to the cause of liberty.

Our position, then, can be stated as follows:

1) Personal experiences (I) and percepts (Eye) are the foundation from which children generate the visual symbols of their graphic imagery. Prevailing visual formulas are a part of the child's experience of the world. The educational effect of these conventional devices can be positive or negative. Normally, they have relatively little influence on the child's early graphic statements. Moreover, far more than imitation or modeling is involved. A chain of inferences, generalizations, and rule implementation is entailed in even the earliest representational drawings.

2) As children interact with their environment and attempt to come to grips with and communicate their experiences, they have the capacity to begin looking and studying more critically and experimentally in a problem solving manner.

3) While some children respond to this challenge by relying primarily on the combination of existing visual devices, others are more selective. These self-actualizing youngsters critically compare conventional devices and integrate these with symbols of their own. In such cases, the process of adoption is selective, albeit implicit more often than not.

4) With a visual vocabulary comprised of some invented symbols and selected conventions that have been mastered and integrated into his/her dictionary of visual images, a child will be able to refine and further develop the system, occasionally modifying some of the symbols, intuitively checking their effectiveness against personal purposes and new percepts.

5) Once a child has acquired a functional set of visual symbols, that set represents a method of looking, of selecting, and of rendering meanings. Subsequent drawings and meanings are affected. The process can continue to be inventive or cease to be, which occurs when problem solving subsides.

Concluding Discussion

The ideas of Arnheim, McFee, and other early theorists writing on child development are not new; nor is the revolutionary rhetoric of Thomas Jefferson. Indeed, even the idea of the title of this article, that the eye is a window to the human mind, is rooted in ancient Mesopotanian imagery. Nor is it uncommon for practitioners, including curriculum designers, to get caught up in new methodologies without taking the time to ask basic value questions such as whether human minds are capable of self-programming--of problem finding, problem solving, and problem checking.

The position taken in this paper is not a new one; however, we have only begun to make the case that personal experience and active perception are the epistemic base from which children generate visual symbols; that a chain of inferences and rule implementation is entailed in even the earliest graphic depictions; that problem solving comes into play as children interact with their environment and attempt to make sense of and communicate their experiences of the world; and, that children can be helped to become more critical in sorting through the prevalent visual conventions, and selectively incorporating these with their own learned and invented symbols. We challenge art educators to join in our concerns.

Notes

1. In earlier correspondence and public as well as published debate, Wilson has contended that "personality is itself a cultural bi-product," that "no amount of being-in-the-world has much direct effect upon drawing programs," and that "*all* children learn to draw...*primarily* from their exposure to the drawings of others" (1977, p. 31, emphasis added).

2. A version of this paper was reported at the Seminar for Research in Art Education, National Art Education Association Conference, Dallas, 1985. The study was funded in part by the Appalachian State University Graduate Studies and Research Office. Win Faulkner, ASU art education graduate student, provided research assistance.

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The People's Show:

Promoting Critical Response

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Abstract

An exhibition of artwork done by local artists was sponsored by a midwesern university gallery to promote greater community involvement. It was open to all artists and all media for a small entrance fee. A questionnaire of provocative categories was given out at the opening to elicit spectator reactions to the work and to help them vote. They were asked to decide which works best represented the particular categories. Responses to the show were mostly positive; however, certain artworks evoked much controversy and publicity. Two artworks, bordering on the pornographic, raised the question: Is art anything one can get away with? The press and public valued the work for its shock effect. Academia remained silent which raised another question: What is the role of art departments and art educators in considering the ethical dimension of art, to separate the schlock from the shock?

"Oh, my God, it's disgusting," said one person.

"But, hey it's art. It's different," quipped a second. "They usually just show women."

"I thought it was funny," commented a third.

"I don't think it's art at all," retorted a fourth.

These responses ranging from embarrassment, to rationalization, to delight, and even to nonacceptance represent a gamut of opinions about a polaroid montage called THE AMERICAN EGO. Each segment featured closeups of the artist's genitals. In one segment a little American flag protruded from the artist's rump. Obviously, this work was very controversial.

It was one of 335 creations made by 172 local artists displayed in a university art gallery during November of 1984. This open invitational, non-juried show was one of the most popular events ever featured by the gallery. The purpose of the show was to provide an opportunity for local artists of all ages and experience to exhibit their work. The show also tried to promote a process of evaluating artwork by supporting one's opinions with substantial aesthetic reasons.

In order to foster a critical thinking approach, two university art historians devised a questionnaire with categories to guide the people's votes on the artworks. These categories which included most popular, most classical, prettiest, best paint-by-number, most functional, most like real art, most obscene, most technical, and most shock of the new, were left vague to promote reflection about the nature of the categories as well.

The exhibit provoked much criticism, publicity, and controversy. In general, the public responded positively to the show and some comments included exciting, creative, invigorating, way-out, humorous, and eye-opening. Variety was hailed as the show's best quality. "People entered things they wouldn't have done otherwise, and they weren't afraid to break the rules," commented a lawyer.

An ambulance driver thought that the show was people-oriented because of the varied display of styles and competencies. A local art critic reviewed the show as having interesting surprises and noteworthy messages. It was also noted that the show reminded one that art exists in many categories--some folksie and some highbrow--and that all can be valid.

The voting results were predictable. An idealized portrait of a young woman was considered the most beautiful, and a clear blown glass vase was the prettiest. The most technical award went to a model ship constructed of metal pieces soldered together, and the most functional was awarded to a woven parka. A ceramic chess set featuring famous football heroes from the Browns was the most popular.

"I can relate to it; it's well done and clever. You can consider it trite, but I still like it," responded one person.

"I would say that it's the most useful because one can play all day with it," replied a second.

Several works overlapped categories in the judging so that the booby prize went to the pieces with the most votes. No artist could win more than once.

Representational works were favored both in categories and votes which annoyed some artists who felt that an abstract category for non-representational works was needed or a category which rewarded the formal use of art elements. These artists also felt that the categories exploited the negative, such as the use of obscene as a choice. Others felt that the classical category was misleading since the winner of that award was a junk collage done by an art class. It was called HOMAGE TO OSU.

"I've seen garbage before, but this takes the cake. Look at it--paper, cans, a comb," complained one viewer. Some felt that students from the class might have stuffed the ballot box.

Another viewer observed, "I would say it's most like real art."

The category, most like real art, invited some debate from spectators. Several people felt that everything in the show was real art, because of the artworks' concreteness and because they were made by artists. Others felt that real art referred to realistic art. Finally, one student remarked, "There are a few lewd ones that are lacking in good taste. Someone is having a good laugh. It's real art, even if it's pornographic."

The most sensational works had the most controversial content, such as an expressive painting of a castration scene. The making of a woman was recognized as the greatest shock of the new. The artist's provocative subject, impasto technique, and restrained detail were indeed dramatic. In contrast, the polaroid montage, THE AMERICAN EGO, was dubbed as the most outrageous. One art critic acclaimed these two pieces a battle of the sexes.

Male dominance was seen as a philosophical concern of the show. Members of the press panned THE AMERICAN EGO as so profound they couldn't understand it. The artist was questioned as to its meaning and he answered, "It suggests the impotence of American foreign policy." Although a local art critic took a position with the artist, it was obvious the press, the public, and a few art professors had different interpretations of the little American flag and its relevance to foreign policy.

The major controversy was not the shock or schlock value (See Note 1) but the status of this work. It raised a fundamental question in many people's minds. "Is art anything you can get away with?" The work was viewed as outrageous, narcissistic and devoid of any reference to the declared content.

In the past, aesthetics was commonly regarded as the study of beauty and taste. Kant (1952) tried to establish aesthetics as a purist phenomenon, devoid of outside interests, such as ethics, politics and religion. Today, aesthetics has a broader meaning which involves the study of the nature, origin, meaning, and kinds of art. To assume that art and aesthetics is devoid of any hidden influences is to be blind, since it exists within a cultural milieu and is part of historical traditions (Margolis, 1980).

Dissent has always been an American ideal and, in turn, it invites criticism. Criticism that only accepts, or ignores, dissenting opinions is one-sided. An institution which prefers to be uncommitted to some form of ethical code in its aesthetic framework are nihilistic. The argument has been made (see note 2) that one cannot separate the aesthetic from the ethical because they both evolve from the same root of "praxis," meaning "the good" (Arendt, 1958). Today the trend in aesthetic criticism is shifting to a broader and more socially concerned position (Lippard, 1984); and institutions, artists and art educators must take a stand to protect the common good, as well as allow individual opinion.

What can art educators learn from staging such events? What kind of critical thought do art departments and art educators value? If we promote blockbuster shows and sponsor exhibits where the results are unquestioned, do we learn anything new? If questionnaires are worded so vaguely, does the public learn anything new? Do we censor works first or invite public reflection? Does the institution have a role beyond merely sponsoring a show? Should art professors voice their opinions?

It was learned that open invitational, non-juried shows instigate participation and publicity. Many local artists clamor for recognition of their styles, techniques, forms, and messages. In a show of this kind, a great variety of art forms, media, interests, and artistic levels are portrayed and this can be instructive. The exhibit can result in economic profit even if only a small entry fee is charged. A regional aesthetic or the taste in a particular community may be revealed. Such a show can be used to promote critical thought on the nature of art as well as its qualities. By inviting different contending viewpoints and criticisms, a healthy exchange of ideas might take place where all learn form the experience. Art educators do have the choice to reflect on such matters as well, by presenting their own perspective and those of others. It is within their role to include the ethical dimension as one aspect of aesthetics. The unfamiliar and the unexpected are often interpreted negatively by the inexperienced; but if an audience examines a work with adequate understanding of the artistic codes used, the schlock will be separated from the shock.

Notes

1. In her article "Sex and Death and Shock and Schlock," Lippard (1984, p. 189) discusses the politics of porn, censorshp and selection, as an issue that must have confronted the organizers of the controversial 1980 "Times Square Show," a sleazy panorama of artist-organized cheap artworks featuring violence and sex. Such work mainly aims to shock the public and doesn't give a damn about what people think. Lippard feels that artists of aesthetic integrity usually avoid misunderstandings by using codes more familiar to their audiences. In the long run, she hopes that such raw material might evolve into more expressive and acceptable forms. What good is it if artists alienate their audiences? She also points out that for every thesis there is an antithesis in a show of this nature to balance out the blood and the gore.
2. Arendt's interpretation of praxis as good is derived from Aristotle's distinction between techne and praxis. Art or techne is the rational ability or form of praxis that makes the product. When the maker adheres to the guidelines of his art, the products will be good and useful. The practical science of ethics emphasizes principles to insure actions that will lead to happiness and the general good as goals. These two aspects are united by prudence which relies on an open outlook as to what ought to be done. The production of art has become technically controlled or technique oriented, and human practices have become regulated by the dominant social or art school order, but not by social and moral consciousness.

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The Pervasiveness of Culture:
Significance for Art Education

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Abstract

Much of what we learn, we are not aware of--it is at a taken-for-granted level. This learning is so embedded in our thinking and behavior that even as educators we are often unable to work with or examine these cultural beliefs and assumptions in our teaching and social interactions. In this paper, it is proposed that art educators identify the pervasiveness of culture particularly within educational settings and how cultural attitudes related to art are internalized within society and affect the teaching/learning process.

Culture can be defined as the shared attitudes, values, and beliefs of a group of people. Culture forms a system of references or standards for what will be accepted as aesthetic--what role the artist will play, the social setting for the aesthetic experience, and what position the perceiver or audience may occupy.

> Dark (1978) notes:
> It is the activation of the system of reference by the personnel, performing their roles, which produces art...It follows that the preferences which a people have, and the choices which they make, operate within and are circumscribed by the system of taste, of appropriateness, of aptness, to which the society subscribes. (p. 49)

The culture which a society establishes does not merely provide a set of rules by which members live. The process of socialization internalizes procedures for being able to interpret and incorporate these sets of rules into experiences that are at a taken-for-granted level of consciousness. Cook (1976) referred to this process as "interpretive procedures" and "taken-for-granted assumptions that enables the member to see the rules in the first place." (p. 350)

Cultural Pervasiveness in Schools

Understanding the pervasiveness of culture in determining ways of talking, perceiving, social interacting, and thinking has a tremendous implication within the context of education. The school transmits the dominant culture's reality and pre-established set of references for behavior that becomes internalized by its members. Without opportunities to examine and be knowledgeable about this socialization process, teachers and students are unable to act upon or become co-producers of their own cultural assumptions. Bowers (1974) proposed the development of cultural literacy in the curriculum which would provide experiences for students to become consciously aware of their own culture as well as to translate their understanding to other cultural settings.

Research into the concept and process of culture is significant for understanding modes of communication and attitudes affecting learning. Leacock (1976) illustrated the importance of culture's role in classroom interaction:

> Learning and exchanging knowledge are conceived differently in different cultures. So, too, are traditional styles of behavior between adults and children. Teachers working with Puerto Rican students often find that a child being reprimanded does not look at them or respond to their statements. They may think the child sullen, rebellious, or rude. In the cultural terms of the child, however, he is expressing acquiescence and respect. Understandably, this culture difference enables a teacher to see behind socially patterned behavior to a child's actual feelings, and to relate to him as an individual. (p. 419)

Cohen (1976) conducted a study in which it was found that low-income groups differed from middle-income groups in their modes of cognitive organization. The middle-class group demonstrated a range of analytic modes of cognition, whereas, the low-economic group used what Cohen termed relational skills in conceptual styles. Three distinct areas of incompatibility between the groups included (1) perception of time (low-economic group perceived discrete moments, rather than a continuum),

(2) concept of self in social space (low-economic perceived the self in a central position rather than in a position relative to others), and (3) causality (low-economic group perceived specific rather than multiple causality).

> Without the assumption of linearity, such notions as social mobility, the value of money, improving one's performance, getting ahead, infinity, or hierarchies of any type, all of which presume the linear extension of vertical elements, do not have meaning for the relational child. In essence, the requirements for formal abstraction and extraction of components to produce linear continua are not logically possible within the relational rule-set. (Cohen, p. 303)

Cohen found that the schools rewarded and reinforced analytic modes of thinking and social interaction which placed the low-economic cultural group in conflict producing settings.

Such educational findings indicate that art educators attempting to understand the processes involved in aesthetic experience and learning in art need to be aware of and examine the contributions to be derived from such fields as anthropology, sociology, and philosophy. Feldman (1980) has argued for the use of anthropological and historical methods and concepts in art education. He noted that anthropology is useful in understanding art within actual cultural settings because the emphasis is placed on real life experiences and artifacts rather than devised experimental conditions (p. 7).

Sociocultural Research in Art Education

Unfortunately, social-cultural research has not been highly utilized in art education literature, and the nature of aesthetic responses and cross-cultural research has been dominated by psychological and experimental orientations (Boyer, 1983). However, there has appeared an increasing number of art educators advocating sociocultural research in aesthetic learning. Johnson (1983) urges art educators to provide students with knowledge and "experiences that lead them to an understanding of the phenomenon of art in culture and society so that they can assess and decide what their own relationships will be to concepts and objects comprising the visual arts" (p. 47). Johnson further proposes that the theoretical perspective of art educators be more socially relevant and that concepts be drawn from theories in symbolic interaction, symbolic anthropology, and the sociology of knowledge.

McFee (1980) suggests that art educators develop an awareness of cultural factors that affect aesthetic behavior and understand how experiences in a culture influence what people will learn to see and how they will see it. Hamblen (1982) posites that artistic perceptions are determined by learned behaviors, values, and attitudes of both the artist and the perceiver of art. Such perspectives have placed more significance on cultural transmission and established cultural attitudes affecting aesthetic response.

Significant factors identified in sociocultural research for developing an ability to understand taken-for-granted values in art include (1) a concentration on cultural experiences or expectations of the perceiver, (2) affect or influence of the cultural environment, and (3) the cultural or social content in a work of art.

Art educators writing in sociocultural areas suggest that differences in aesthetic values exist not only in large cultural groups but also within smaller subcultures. Mann (1979) found research evidence to support the claim that "reference for and a valuation of artistic fare is primarily a function of social class, education, and income" (p.16). Leacock (1976) identified variations within subcultures or microcultures:

> Any definable group has what can be called a "culture." One can speak of the "culture: of different institutions--hospitals have different "cultures: on the whole from schools, and both from business houses. Within certain general patterns of "school culture," each school develops its own traditions. One can even speak of certain "classroom culture" developed during the short lifetime of a common experience shared by a teacher and a group of children. (p. 421)

When studying groups outside of specific institutions, one must recognize that nationality, religion, regional areas and/or income are major factors in identifying variations in values, attitudes, and beliefs.

Jagodzinski (1982) referred to complex societies where students did not always share the same cultural knowledge. Factors such as age, sex, and status were possible determinants in cognitive nonsharing. Schools have been called arenas of cultural conflict (Wilcox, 1982) where incorporated skills and conceptual styles do not include those learned and employed by the students. Wilcox, an educational anthropologist stated:

> Children may have to attempt to function in an alien environment that requires behavior which is in striking contradiction to that which they have been taught to value. (p. 467)

Aesthetic Learning Experiences

A society's particular construct of reality creates a pervasive quality for the experiences of both the teacher and the learner. An aesthetic learning experience is a complex and multi-dimensional phenomenon influenced on every level by the attitudes and values subscribed to it by society. The artist, the work of art, the social setting, and the perceiver exist and operate within a unique system of references that determine the appropriateness of roles and expectations.

Variations in communication modes, both verbal and nonverbal, act upon and affect the transmission of cultural references or standards in aesthetic learning. Philips (1983), in a study of Indian Reservation children, found that behavioral means for transmitting linguistic messages were culturally determined. He observed that the Indian children's attention structure and linguistic interaction differs in both selectivity and in interpretation from that of persons with white, middle-class backgrounds. Such attention structures and linguistic interactions are integral processes within aesthetic response and learning experience. The school represents the dominant culture which provides the standards for deciding what is, what can be done, and what operational procedures are to be used for dealing with people and things. Since teachers come from the culture of reference and are seen as bearers of the standards for the more dominant segment of society, it is unlikely they will be effective communicators with students from other cultures unless they become aware of the dynamics at work (Wilcox, 1982).

The qualitative descriptive research that art educators and other researchers are doing in sociocultural studies has major implications for understanding individual and group differences toward responding and acquiring knowledge in art in both formal and informal educational settings. Both the type of questions asked and the methodologies employed by anthropologists and other sociocultural researchers need to be understood and utilized to a greater extent by art educators. Further research needs to be conducted which describes relationships between culture and aesthetics and asesses the possible implications for structuring curriculum strategies and teaching practices. In particular, the taken-for-granted cultural learning that exists in the schools as hidden curriculum needs to be critically identified and examined by both teachers and students. If, as art educators, we are unaware of our own cultural biases and the pervasiveness of culture in the educational setting, we will be unable to improve upon developing theories or practice in art education.

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The Feldman Method of Art Criticism:
Is it Adequate for the Socially Concerned Art Educator?

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The structure and inherent values of the Feldman (1981) method of art criticism are debated in some art education circles. On one hand it is argued that the Feldman method, because of its emphasis on formal analysis, lends itself more readily to analytical formalist criticism, and is thus not an adequate instrument for socially concerned art educators. The other side of the debate has it that the method is appropriate for socially contextual interpretation when applied by socially concerned art educators. My thesis is that Feldman's method is well suited for socially contextual criticism of aesthetic forms. I intend to develop this thesis through examining the structure of the method, the context from which it has arisen including the general historical context, the propensities of Feldman's writings not directly related to art criticism, the ways in which Feldman has used the method, and finally through explication of my own socially-centered use of it.

A specific criticism I have heard is that the Feldman method isolates artworks from personal and public life through an excessive emphasis on formal analysis. This argument has it that the Feldman method emphasizes formal qualities and relationships even to the extent of incorporating a distinct and separate stage called formal analysis unlike, for example, the method developed by Ralph Smith (1968). Thus, it seems logical that a defense of the Feldman method as socially relevant should begin with an examination of its structure.

Behavioral scientists, formalist artists, and like creatures are fond of saying that the entities they have developed are value free. A given scientific method according to this view, is simply an instrument, a methodology, which in its essence is value free. Likewise, the formalist artist will tell us that his forms are essentially value free, that he is simply striving for some significant form, some ideal relationship between the formal qualities developed in the work. I would have to take issue with this stance which holds that instruments and artifacts may be value free. At the root of any instrument or artifact, including a work of art, is the reason or reasons for its development. These reasons are basically values personified. The reason for the development of a rat trap is to catch a rat. This implies a definite prejudice against rats--a value judgment. The reason for the development of quantitative analysis is to consciously avoid being led by emotive/subjective/qualitative factors in analyzing whatever it is that is being analyzed. This shows, at root, a definite bias against qualitative judgments. Ironically, at its roots, such a system must begin with the qualitative judgment that the quantitative method is more fair, more equitable, in short more "scientific." Likewise, at the root of formally defined art forms, which profess to be socially neutral, is the concept of ideal or significant forms and relationships. One can only ask the question, ideal and significant according to whom, in what context, and with what psychological and social load? In short, it is my contention that there is no such thing as a neutral instrument or artifact; in fact, every instrument in being designed to do what it does has social and psychological values built into its structure. This includes the Feldman method of art criticism.

To some extent all systems of art criticism are social in nature. The very fact that the critic is talking about or writing about art-communicating discursively about visual form - defines the act as social. As Rosenberg (1966) presents it, the first requirement of any system of criticism is that it be relevant to the art under consideration. So whether the critic is discussing Delacroix's Liberty Leading the People, or Mondrian's Broadway Boogie Woogie, he is performing a social function simply by amplifying and clarifying values inherent in the visual forms. Taking this general and broad concept of social purpose, one could accurately say that any critical method which adequately explicates the values inherent in any given aesthetic form is socially defined.

In a narrower sense, however, it might be said that some methods lend themselves more adequately to one type of art or another because of the characteristics inherent in the methods' structures. One may focus more on formal structure, another on psychological characterization, another on social interpretation, and so on. Professor Smith's method, for example, in its initial stages, allows for the inclusion of contextual material such as art historical information, which is excluded from the first stages of the Feldman method. Likewise, Smith's inclusion of characterization in the form of value laden adjectives and metaphorical language in analysis is avoided by the Feldman method. These appear to be rather fundamental differences which at first blush would lead one to believe Professor Smith to be more contextually oriented (thus more socially defined?) than Professor Feldman. Further evidence for this hypothesis might be gathered in finding that the Feldman method has an added stage of purely formal analysis unlike the Smith method. The evidence seems to imply that the Feldman method lends itself to formalist criticism, especially in comparison to the other dominant model currently being used in the field of art education. Furthermore, Clements (1979) would have us believe that neither of the dominant methods are adequate and that his inductive model is better in that it is "more respectful of personal sensibility" and "lets the hypothesis develop in a natural rather than an artificial way" (p. 69). Clements feels that the arbitrary division of description from formal analysis, and the separation of value laden statements from statements of incontestable fact is a "limiting, elementary, uninteresting and artificial way to begin." (p. 69)

Clements' assertion that mixing of categories mirrors the natural "rapidity and instability of total emotional reactions" (p. 30) may be true, but it has one logical flaw when applied to a theory of art criticism. Art criticism is a codified, systematized writing or speaking about art. It is not reaction as a sneeze is reaction to dust, as a howl of pain is reaction to something heavy being dropped on one's foot. Just as Dewey (1958) describes the difference between an impulse and its manifestation in a carefully crafted work of art (pp. 58-81) so the critic must go beyond reaction: he must utilize that reaction in a highly structured, carefully developed, linguistic interpretation of visual form. Sensitivity to the qualities directing reaction are crucial to successful criticism but I am not certain that an organically structured (as opposed to organically perceived and felt) analysis is the most appropriate vehicle for revealing all the possibilities of those forms.

It is Feldman's (1981) contention that by consciously excluding art historical and other contextual information from the initial stages of description and formal analysis, and likewise by excluding value-laden statements from these stages, the critic is not deterred from making a complete and thorough analysis of the evidence (pp. 471-474). By avoiding metaphorical characterization, the critic is not drawn from the primary task of the first stages which is the collection of an inventory of evidence. Even John Dewey (1958), organist and pragmatist that he is, supports a two part structure in criticism of discrimination and synthesis (p. 310). Human beings devise systems of categorization in order to break down what is potentially to be known into manageable parts. This is an artificial system, to be sure, but in the same context so is the scientific method. The process of analysis, it seems to me, is much more efficiently accomplished by first collecting the facts, then finding how they fit together before attempting to attach values to them.

This still does not fully solve the problem raised earlier that indicates that because of an emphasis on formal qualities, the Feldman method seems to be less contextual, less human than, for example, the Smith method. The impression of social distance and disconnectedness is a false one which is quickly rectified when one examines Feldman's third stage of interpretation. Obviously, one has been collecting and categorizing evidence for some purpose. Although unstated by Feldman, obviously the "hook" which draws the critic to examine a work of art in the first place is an initial emotive/aesthetic response to its forms. Feldman (1981) states that "the information sought by the art critic is mainly about the sources of his satisfaction or about the bearing of the work on one's world and one's existence in it." (p. 457) One may be further assured that in this initial abstention from overt characterization and value judgments, the Feldman method is not intended to be leading us aimlessly through a fact-gathering jungle just for the sake of finding facts. Though once again this is not made overt in his writing, it is implicit that in gathering the facts one is constantly testing them against an initial reaction toward the development of a hypothesis. This can be verified in the following quote about formal qualities in art. "Style," states Feldman (1981), "leads us to look for meanings beneath the subject matter and apparent purpose of a work. Just as handwriting conveys meanings which are not in the works alone, style reveals much about an artist's way of thinking about his environment, and about the society and culture in which his work is rooted." (p. 145) In the context of his writing, it becomes fairly apparent Feldman's emphasis on formal qualities is not simply to explicate the nature and value of form, but to ultimately use form to explicate the values of life.

It is in the third stage of interpretation that the critic is given free reign to bring his life experiences, his values, his expectations, his dreams and his desires to bear on the evidence collected. The Feldman method does not neglect contextualism, social, psychological, environmental, or otherwise; it simply delays such value judgments until all the evidence has been collected and weighed. This seems not only adequate for socially-defined criticism, but also superior to other existing methods in that it gives the critic less opportunity to miss evidence which may be critical to well grounded interpretation. As defined by Mittler (1982), any system of criticism emphasizes information given by the work, rather than giving information about the work which is the realm of art history (p. 36). There is no reason why one cannot, however, bring everything one knows to bear in interpretation, including information about the work, about the context of its making, about the tenor of its times, and about the nature of human beings. Interpretation, in the Feldman method is intended to go the direction in which the critic takes it, provided he continually refers back to the evidence provided by the work of art. The task of the critic is to clarify the meaning and values inherent in the work. If the work is socially-defined, the Feldman method is adequate for shedding light on those qualities which make it so.

The Feldman method does run into a little serious trouble at the stage of evaluation with those who would interpret the words "socially-defined" to mean socialist or anti-capitalist. Feldman's rationale for determining the significance of an art work tends to be hierarchial, placing one work above another. In developing this position, he refers to the necessity for hierarchial ordering, among other reasons, in order to place a monetary value on a piece to satisfy the needs of the collector, connoisseur, and gallery and museum curators (pp. 456-458). This position has been criticized as being elitist and thus not socially defined, and indeed, may appear to be counter to the position of most socially concerned art educators. Being counter to the Social Caucus position does not, however, make the Feldman position socially irrelevant. In our western culture, at this point, whether one agrees with it or not, money is an (the?) epitomy of a socially agreed upon, thus socially-defined modus operandi. In capitalist society, money is a primary means of establishing and demarking not only pecuniary worth, but other kinds of worth as well. Many of the best things in life are not free. Because they are good, they cost money. Because they are excellent, they cost more money. The valuing of art works in a pecuniarily as well as intrinsically hierarchial manner, then, is, though somewhat circuitously, social evaluation. One may disagree with the system, with who does the evaluating and for what reasons, but in a capitalist society, hierarchial pecuniary evaluation is definitely a socially contextual process. The fact that a Frank Stella, Jackson Pollack, or Bridget Riley piece brings big money reflects the fact that even the formalist aesthetic is an agreed upon socially accepted way of functioning in some circles of society. Feldman understands this and is pragmatic in his incorporation of social reality into the development of his method.

A final point about structure is in order. I think an extremely powerful argument for socially defined consciousness within the method is the overall clarity and simplicity with which it was constructed. Because of the method's simplicity, the art of criticism becomes available to the masses unlike the more opaque philosophical approaches of Munro (1941), Beardsley (1982), Dewey (1958) and other aestheticians. In clearly and simply delineating a method, Feldman gives all of us the opportunity to critically examine works of art and make up our own minds as to content and quality, rather than having to rely on expert opinion. Freedom and social egalatarianism come to a society only to the extent that the critical judgments of the populace are their own, and not based on the perceptions, expectations, and values of an expert or authority.

Light may also be shed on the Feldman method by examining the context from which it has arisen, including historical sources. In addition, the content of Feldman's writing not directly concerned with art criticism may give us an idea of his philosophical propensities. The historian would call this a study of the method's provenance.

The most obvious place to begin looking are Feldman's books on art and art education. One simply has to examine the titles of the chapters in Becoming Human Through Art (1970) to begin to get a feeling for Feldman's deep and abiding concern for art as a reflection and manifestation of the human condition. Is there another general text in the field that devotes a whole chapter exclusively to the anthropological and historical dimensions of art? In that chapter Feldman describes the social, critical and anthropological aspects of art in detail, clearly defining connections between criticism as a search for meaning and aesthetic artifacts as vessels of cultural as well as aesthetic meaning which have developed from life (pp. 3-29). A more recent work which indicates that Feldman continues to explore the anthropological/sociological aspects of art is his book entitled The Artist (1982) in which he explores the nature of making art in different cultural settings and the nature of artists as different social types.

Other work by Feldman also indicates his socially defined inclination. In "A Socialist Critique of Art History in the USA" (1978), Feldman bemoans the notion of the preciousness of art as being measurable in pecuniary or in idiosyncratic and hedonistic terms. He also points out that works separated from their matrix in time are denatured and in danger of being examined by a type of criticism which Feldman describes as dehumanized formalism (p. 26). In this work Feldman also begins to develop his now familiar theme of art as work connected to a specific economic, social, and political context (pp. 26-27). This is hardly the stuff of a man inclined toward cool, formal positions in critical analysis. He concludes this piece by asking art historians to "show us the connections [between] artistic imagery and the social, moral, and economic dilemmas of [our] lives." (p. 28)

Following through with a concept of art as inherently contextual, Feldman brought us the AIM statement (1982a). Feldman's statement of Art in the Mainstream in which he states that art means work, language, and values was so contextually defined, that it set off a great number of reactions. An entire issue of Viewpoints (1984) was dedicated to responses to the AIM statement, all but one of which thought Feldman had gone too far. Feldman (1982c) carried on in the literature making such statements as, "there are moral and social values underlying the enterprise [of art instruction] that give meaning to our professional existence." (p. 99) At one point, Professor Smith (1982) entered the debate warning Feldman, from an essentialist point of view, not to lose sight of those aesthetic qualities which in the first instance define art as art (p. 18). Feldman (1982c) delivered a blistering response stating that instead of starting from assumptions about what is artistically valuable, as Smith suggested, "critical theory starts from assumptions about what is humanly significant." (p. 21) This is not the position of one who advocates formally defined art criticism.

Further evidence for Feldman as a social contextualist is found in examining the historical and contemporary figures who have influenced his thought. In personal correspondence (December 21, 1984), Feldman has indicated to me that one of his major influences was John Dewey. Certainly, the concern with the human condition as reflected in Dewey is also evident in Feldman. Among other influences mentioned are Ruskin (1958), Hauser (1951), and Panofsky (1955).

It seems that Pepper (1949) is closer to being a formalist than any of the others who have influenced Feldman in the development of his critical model, and may in fact be a primary contributor to Feldman's constructing a separate stage of formal analysis. Certainly as a group, however, these men that Feldman mentions as primary influences cannot be considered to be formalists in their approach to the visual arts.

The point that Feldman does not fall in the formalist tradition may be made even stronger by comparing him to a man not on the above list, a founder of formalism, Clive Bell (1958). Clive Bell articulated the formalist position when he stated that the one quality peculiar to all artworks is significant form. Significant form he defined as "the relations and combinations of lines and colors to produce an effect that is aesthetically moving." (p. 17) To be continually pointing out those parts, the sum, or rather the combination, of which unite to produce significant form, is the function of criticism." (p. 18) He states in another place, "If the forms of a work of art are significant its provenance is irrelevant." (p. 33) Finally, he says that although "art owes nothing to life, life, indeed, owes a great deal to art." (p. 59) These are statements by the classic American formalist critic of the twentieth century. In light of these remarks, and those quoted from Feldman previously, those who would put Feldman in the formalist camp must have a very broad definition of formalism indeed! Another test of provenance may be made through an examination of how Feldman uses his own method. In Varieties of Visual Experience (1981), Feldman functions as a socially contextual critic. Rather than being chronologically ordered, as most art appreciation books are, Varieties is organized to reflect the context and social/psychological geneses of given aesthetic styles. At this point, it is well to make clear that socially concerned criticism, does not ignore formal qualities nor does it exclude formally expressivist works as a proper realm of examination. Rather, it includes a larger social/contextual dimension missing in either of the other two realms in its analysis. Obviously, the socially concerned critic cannot attach cognitively framed social meaning to the expressive works arising from cognitively subliminal roots such as Abstract Expressionism, Automatism, and so on. But the socially concerned critic may certainly comment on the nature of these images in the larger social context. Indeed, it is his duty to do so. In this context, we must regard Feldman admirably. Witness his passage in Varieties of Visual Experience on the development of the human image in painting and his attendant discussion of social meaning in relation to technical achievement and propensities in form (pp. 281-292). Feldman shares his discoveries about art as an extension of meanings arising from life, where art begins.

Finally, I want to interject a personal note into the argument of context, or provenance. Ed Feldman served as my dissertation co-advisor at the University of Georgia. My dissertation (Anderson, 1983), which utilized the Feldman method as a central component, focused on critically analyzing contemporary American street murals. For those who are unfamiliar with the street mural genre, the aesthetic and thematic content is generally very socially oriented, usually quite a distance to the left of political center, and often instrumentalist in intent. Street murals usually reflect political subcultures. Feldman not only allowed me to tackle this subject but encouraged it. There were times, I will admit, when he would warn me that my dissertation should stay in the realm of art rather than center in sociology; but on reflection I understand that he was right in helping me define the aesthetic qualities which make art art, and not a social science. I adapted the Feldman method somewhat to fit my needs in critiquing this socially defined form. At the stages of interpretation and evaluation, I liberally inserted quotes from works that range from Tom Wolfe's Electric Kool Aid Acid Test (1969) to Edward Hassinger's The Rural Component of American Sociology (1978), to substantiate and support contextually oriented interpretations I had made. I did this with Feldman's (at least tacit) support and I believe overt blessing. As a socially concerned art educator and critic, I found the Feldman method and Feldman himself to be open to social contextualism and adaptable to my needs.

In short, it seems there is no lack of evidence to indicate that Feldman is, indeed, socially contextual in his approach to art criticism and to art education. It has been argued that the Feldman method of art criticism, which has been criticized as putting undo emphasis on formal analysis at the expense of socially defined interpretation, is very adequate as an instrument for the socially concerned art educator. It has been proposed that the stage of formal analysis ultimately contributes to a greater understanding of the forms which are the vehicle carrying not only aesthetic but also cultural meaning. Finally, it has been shown that the method has been used very successfully by Feldman and others to critique aesthetic forms in a culturally contextual manner. Thus, it is propounded that the Feldman method is an excellent instrument for critical analysis for the socially concerned art educator.

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Various Applications of the Feldman Method

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The way I see the Feldman Method is as a teaching technique and not as a research tool. The reason I even mention this is that apparently others use it as a research tool. I suppose it could be used that way, but I don't see it that way. I certainly agree, however, that art educators need to do a great deal of homework concerning society, sociology, and art history, especially those art educators who subscribe to the viewpoints of the Caucus--I imagine many of you in here are sympathetic to the Caucus. We're certainly obligated to be well informed in history, art history, and sociology. There's a rather limited literature on the sociology of art. We ought to know that, and perhaps we should develop our own literature regarding the connections between art and society. But I look at the model proposed by Feldman primarily as a teaching technique. As a teaching technique, it can be employed by the teacher in three different ways.

First, the teacher--in front of his or her students--can use the model (or something similar to it) in describing works of art; in other words, the teacher functioning as a role model. Secondly, the teacher can have the students learn the method as a structure to talk or write about art; and I have done this with college-aged students. A third way it can be used is in a seminar discussion with a group of twenty or thirty students, possibly. The students go through the different stages of the model; of course, each one of them talking one at a time. Perhaps, ten or so students use the description phase; and the next ten students or so use the analysis phase and so on. This is a very good method, I feel, of unfolding the meanings or the possibilities or potentialities in a work of art using the Feldman model in a seminar setting. I use it all three ways--to role model, as a structure for student writing, and for group discussion in a seminar.

Now, because of the question posed by the panel--I mean the original question the panel was to consider, "Is the Feldman model adequate for social analysis or is it just adequate for cold formalism?"--I decided to point out how I think it is adequate for social analysis, and that will somewhat duplicate what has already been said. I will also compare Feldman's method to the bracketing method used for phenomenology, which is an entirely different type of ideological position. This position is certainly not--at least to a phenomenologist--one of cold formalism. I am not going to explain phenomenology. I don't know if anybody can, but I'll try to point out how the model used for phenomenology is similar to the one developed by Feldman.

First of all, in case you are not too familiar with phenomenology, it's a philosophical movement that started way back in the early part of this century by Edmund Husserl, a German philosopher. It was initially a reaction against scienticism, or what was called "scienticism" back then, which had to do with a perception that reality was interpreted too much by scientists and by the logical or, I should say, the philosophical handmaiden of science which was logical positivism. The scientific approach to reality was criticized for ignoring subjective feelings and intuitions and for regarding human life as little more than some sort of elaborate machine. Phenomenology was interested in resolving the ancient traditional conflict between the subjective and objective or the mind/body conflict. Another theme placed emphasis on consciousness, which the phenomenologists called intentionality. Phenomenology also attempted to investigate human experience in a very radical way.

In the forties and fifties, phenomenology became linked with the philosophy of existentialism. That gives some idea of the tone of phenomenology--that it could be in cahoots, so to speak, with existentialism. The method of investigation of phenomenology was called the epoche', which is a Greek word for bracketing. What is bracketing? Bracketing is the means to rid the mind of conventional ways of looking at the world--conventional ways like scientific theories, especially popular scientific theories which had become cliches--and to go beyond those to really look at reality in a radical way. When I say radical way, I mean getting to the root of reality through one's own experiences. The method was called phenomenological reduction which had to do with bracketing out presuppositions as much as possible when analyzing something, for example, an art work. Instead of looking at the art work and falling back on previous training--I'm speaking about art school training such as looking at it in terms of principles of design or art history or something like that--each individual would attempt to really look at what was there. Perhaps later on in the process of investigation, the brackets would be widened a bit to allow some of these other things to be considered.

What about phenomenology and art education? During the 1960s, a number of art educators explored the possibilities of applying the principles of phenomenology to art and art education. Those people were--and I hope I haven't left anybody out, but I know of three of them--David Ecker, Hugh Stumbo, and Eugene Kaelin, who was actually an educational philosopher interested in aesthetics. What are the similarities between the Feldman method and bracketing? Bracketing had four steps, according to Kaelin. The first step was to describe the surface counters or, if present, the representational counters in a work of art. By counters Kaelin meant the things that count, the features in a work of art. The second step was to describe the relationships among the counters. To speculate on the possible meanings and their interrelationships was third, and to make a judgment about the significance of the work was the final step. Well, what is that anymore than really different terms--or different rhetoric--for description, analysis, interpretation, evaluation.

(Interruption by Feldman: I agree with your comparison, but mine was first.)

I don't know; I was just going to say I was unable to locate The National Society for the Study of Education Yearbook; I don't know if it came out before your book or not.

(Feldman: My book came out in sixty-seven.)

I think there was a yearbook discussion of this and I wasn't able to find it at home.

(Feldman: They talked about it but they didn't do it.)

They didn't do it? All right. Anyway, in the CEMREL publication--which was much later in 1970--*The CEMREL Guidelines: Curriculum Development for Aesthetic Education*, this bracketing method is all laid out. I guess that it is based mostly on Kaelin or something that Kaelin presented at Ohio state in 1966. That was a year earlier than your publication.

(Feldman: We were both in the same institute. Kaelin learned a lot from me. Stumbo was our student.)

Right, I was just going to say this was used extensively by Hugh Stumbo in his classes at the University of Iowa and Illinois State. That is where I became very familiar with the method of bracketing.

What is the aim of phenomenological criticism? The aim is to perceive a work as purely as possible, free of preconceived notions--although to be fair to the *Guidelines* explanation of it, it does make some allowance for historical information. At any rate, Stumbo constantly said, "Be true to your experience," which means, of course, forget about any other ideas or any other notions that are outside the immediate experience with the object. Be true to your experience. Ecker and Kaelin, in the article in which this is discussed, say that an art work "is a shareable public object, the very structures of which control *all* relevant responses to it." I underline all myself to point out that the emphasis is on the observable properties of the art work.

Now, I am critical of the aims of phenomenological criticism. I feel that it is too narrow. I don't believe that aesthetic experience of necessity must be confined to just the observable properties, the seen things in an art work. Ecker and Kaelin downgrade the theoretical terms of historical analyses. They refer to historical pursuits as the art historical fallacy; and I disagree with that. All three of them in their emphasis on liberating the experience of art from presuppositions seem to fall prey to a major modernist presupposition which is that art works should be conceived as autonomous objects removed from the concerns of the world. I feel that to locate an art work in its temporal and social nexus does not detract from the aesthetic experience. However, I do approve of the phenomenological approach as a strategy.

Now, turning to the question of using the Feldman method for social analysis, I have already pointed out that I think it is adequate. The aims of social analysis are to investigate the relationship between art and the cultural context, to enhance not only the viewer's understanding of a work but also his or her aesthetic appreciation of a work. Indeed, I think the more that one knows about a work, even the things that can't be seen in it, the greater or more intense the aesthetic experience will be. Not everybody agrees with that, but that is the way I feel. Social analysis can also determine the social messages and/or social implications of works of art. They don't all have clear messages, but I think almost all of them have social implications.

Now, I'd like to turn to the kind of art examples to use, because, after all, what we're talking about is how this method could be used in the classroom, and this gets down to using art, or having art exemplars, or whatever you want to call them, to use. I had an article in Studies about using popular art versus fine art. I think that this is going to be an issue. If ever we do have programs of aesthetic literacy in which we use the Feldman method, I think we are going to have problems dealing with what kind of art to use, because there is definite disagreement about what art is appropriate. I think it is something that should be considered. I think we should also recognize that almost all art is unfamiliar as far as kids are concerned; and I am talking about university students, too. To us it is familiar, to them it's alien--fine art, especially, and even folk art, say, Pennsylvania Dutch art. It is just as alien and foreign to probably even the kids in Pennsylvania as far as that goes. African art, Polynesian art, any kind of preliterate art is also equally unfamiliar. About the only familiar art to students is popular art: comic art, television, movies, and so forth. So, I think that the decision of which art to use will be an issue.

I would like to describe a teaching situation using the Feldman method for social analysis. The example I'm going to use is the seminar approach. I selected a picture to use for this; but I left it in Fort Worth, unfortunately. I'll just have to describe the picture. Is there a chalkboard I could draw on, or something? The strategy, the way I would use the Feldman method to really bring out, unfold the sociological meaning, would be to initially employ only what I call internal evidence. I think this is the way it is actually presented--in your book or your books. First, look at the picture and describe it; next, analyze the things that are in the description and then base an interpretation upon the evidence found in the description and the analysis.

(Feldman: Right.)

O.K., I think that is one way. I am going to stop at interpretation and call that "interpretation, subhead one." Let me describe a picture, if I may, one that I have used. I played a little game with this particular picture with college-level students; the picture is Rembrandt's "Return of the Prodigal Son." It is one of the parables of Jesus. The son comes back and instead of being scolded by his father for being a wastrel, he's pardoned. The parable says a great deal about Christian pardon as well as family bonds in general. It's very touching and so is the painting by Rembrandt which was done in his later years, very psychological and humanistic. Well, I have shown this painting to art students, including graduate art students at ISU. Even they didn't know it was by Rembrandt, so it worked fine; in other words, it was unfamiliar to art students at all levels.

(Feldman: They don't read the Bible either.)

I guess they don't read the Bible either. It's interesting to see how they arrive at a meaning and talk about, perhaps, the, well, the, I can't really physically describe the picture too well, but it shows the son kneeling before his father. The students recognize that possibly the kneeling figure is a servant, but they don't make a father/son association. They do recognize that the older gentleman is a wealthy, rich gentleman, because they can see his brocaded sleeves, jewelry, and the other figures in the background. The students do arrive at a meaning that isn't too far, perhaps, from the parable itself. At that point, I introduce the outside evidence or the external evidence and point out when the painting was made and who made it; I explain that it was based on the parable. The students are then asked to rewrite their interpretations in light of the additional evidence. Sometimes this is a revelation to them and they come up with richer interpretations, in other words, "interpretation, subhead two." My general method is to use two interpretations: interpretation, subhead one, following description and analysis. Stop the process and introduce the outside evidence which, I think, enriches the entire experience and allows for a more sociological interpretation.

I think this could be done with popular art as well as fine art. In that case, the students would know something about the context of the work; but the teacher could interrupt their interpretation and bring in other themes that they may not have considered--having to do with contemporary society: racism, sexism, the environment, the economy, and so forth. Have them look at that comic strip in light of some of those themes they may have overlooked.

(Feldman: Generational antagonism.)

Perhaps, right. Anyway, this is how I see the Feldman method used in a sociological way. What the phenomenologists used was essentially the same, but theirs was an existential position--not a sociological one.

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The Feldman Approach:
A Catalyst for Examining Issues in Art Criticism Instruction

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In this discussion, I would like to address four issues in relationship to the Feldman (1981) method as well as to the larger concerns of art criticism implementation. I assume that a goal we have in common is to have art criticism be part of the curriculum. The problem needs to be looked at not just in terms of the Feldman method, although that can serve as a framework, but to the larger issues of art criticism instruction per se. There needs to be an assessment of what may be present or missing in literature on art criticism. The issues I'd like to discuss are (1) the efficacy of the Feldman method, (2) relating art criticism instruction to individual differences, (3) contextualizing art criticism instruction, and (4) the need for instructional specificity.

The Feldman Method

First, in terms of the efficacy of the Feldman method, I would like to say that I am personally very compatible with this approach. When I was a graduate student and introduced to this method of art criticism, I found it extremely helpful. It postpones judgment and opens up a tolerance for art forms that one might not initially appreciate. When I introduce this method of art criticism to my students, I call it the not-to-panic approach in that it slows down the whole process of responding to art. One's responses are put into a slow motion, thoughtful exploration. The temporal dimension of the Feldman method may be one of its strongest points.

As a general introduction to what art criticism can accomplish, the Feldman approach is excellent. This, however, has been my personal experience. Having students with a wide range of backgrounds and interests work with this approach is another matter. This is when problems develop, not the least of which is that it takes some students numerous experiences with the format before there is a sense of ease and proficiency. So, even if an instructor is compatible with this approach, there seem to be some problems with implementation.

I would like to suggest that a compatibility with the Feldman format, or with any other particular art criticism approach, is based more on cognitive style and individual preference than on any inherent validity of the format itself. I've noticed that some students never really relate well to the Feldman approach. For example, I had one very bright student who literally could not deal with the Feldman method. For art criticism assignments, she would write poetry in prose style. She wrote very nice papers, but her work was certainly not conforming to the Feldman format. From this and other experiences with individual students who have had difficulty analyzing and interpreting art within the Feldman method, I finally concluded that the Feldman method needs to be considered as just one approach among many. Rather than trying to make any one format all things for all people and all situations, perhaps, just as has been done in regard to artistic expression for students, there is a need to look at individual differences as they relate to art criticism instruction. This leads into my second area of discussion.

Individual Differences

A compilation and description of available art criticism formats needs to be made available (Hamblen, 1985). This would allow us to look at the range of art criticism formats available and to see how specific formats can relate to students in terms of their personality types, cognitive styles, and aesthetic preferences--as well as different educational goals. The other option is to take any one format and see how it can be adjusted to individual needs. It is doubtful, however, that instruction in art criticism will ever be able to be individualized to the extent studio production has been. Art criticism is much more of a structured situation, and that structure itself can almost overridingly dictate what happens. The structure of the format can, in some respects, be considered the message.

Art criticism literature contains comments that students should be allowed to form their own conclusions regarding an art object, but the instructional methodology itself is not individualized. For example, in Approaches to Art in Education, Chapman (1978) presents four very different approaches i.e., inductive, deductive, interactive, and empathic. These approaches, however, are presented as alternatives in relationship to different interpretational outcomes of a given art form, not in terms of alternatives for students with different learning propensities.

Primarily, the art criticism format and the art critical process focus on the object. That is fine if one is dealing with professional art criticism, journalistic art criticism, or scholarly art criticism, but, in the educational setting, the character of the learner needs to enter the equation. There do not seem to be adjustments in art criticism literature for the student's life-world interests and learning style. There is little recognition of the fact that students will process and relate to art critical procedures differently, just as they express themselves differently in their art work. I would suggest that art critical approaches need to be related to personality types, cognitive styles, and aesthetic preferences of students--whether that requires multiple formats or whether singular formats can be adjusted is problematic.

Social Meaning in Art Criticism

The third area I'd like to discuss is the inclusion of social content in the art critical process. This seems to be one of the main criticisms of the Feldman method. It has been charged that Feldman has ignored social content, that his format is formalistic, that he does not take into consideration the life-world of the student, and so on. Actually, from a review of available formats in art education literature and in view of what Dr. Feldman (1970, 1973, 1981) has written in conjunction with his format, his is more socially contextualized than many others.

Feldman has a democratic approach to objects considered worthy of art critical scrutiny. A stated purpose is to understand the variety of art forms in the environment. And, depending upon how the format is used, it is elastic enough to accommodate specific social content. Much of the formalistic problem has developed from using the second, analysis step, only for formal analysis. It is possible to add other types of analysis to this step. For example, there is functional analysis wherein the functions of an object are discussed; there is contextual analysis wherein the time and space dimensions in which an art object does exist or has existed are discussed. There can be an analysis of an object's medium as it relates to technical processes; there can be an analysis of audience reactions and interpretations of an object. Anderson (1985) has suggested that these considerations be covered in the third, interpretation step. That, however, is perhaps too late to deal effectively with aspects on which there has been no previous discussion.

Although there are statements in the literature that art criticism is not a substitute for the aesthetic experience, there seems to be a tendency to either equate the two or to consider art criticism as a preliminary or as a way of sensitizing the student to what are considered distinctly aesthetic qualities. Again, this tends to make the entire process overly formalistic. Feldman describes the critical process as an exploration. Unless one specifies that this exploration is going to be confined to intrinsic qualities, there is no need to preclude any information that is pertinent to understanding the art object.

The curriculum guide for the State of California has four instructional components: aesthetic perception, artistic expression, cultural heritage, and critical analysis (Visual and Performing Arts Framework, 1982). The authors of this guideline have separated aesthetic perception from art criticism. This is a very helpful educational distinction. As mentioned above, there seems to be a tendency to use the art criticism format procedure as a way of dealing aesthetically with an art object or as a means toward developing aesthetic, perceptual acuity. Accordingly, an art criticism format becomes not just a way of dealing with a particular object, but begins to take on a larger prescriptive truth of how it is believed people should relate to art per se. Such an approach unduly encumbers art criticism instruction with numerous strictures. First and foremost, art criticism should be considered an educational procedure that results in expanded skills in exploring the meanings and values of various art forms. There is now the danger of confusing an instructional mode with the aesthetic response.

Mittler's (1982) distinction between art criticism as not requiring any information other than what is perceptually present and art historical approaches as requiring specialized knowledge is helpful and suggests that there could be some reworking of terminology to clarify this issue. As another example, Silverman (1982) differentiates between aesthetic perception, which does not require any specialized knowledge, and aesthetic criticism, which does. Possibly, if one wants a bracketed experience that is very much separate from subjective responses and from the object's social context, it could be called aesthetic criticism. Some other phrase could be used to describe a process whereby any information or experience that can feed into a greater understanding and appreciation of an art object could be included. No matter what terminology is finally chosen, some distinction needs to be made. Equating a particular educational approach with a panindividual and pansocial truth not only confuses the implementation of art criticism but also gives art criticism more weight than it actually deserves in the larger scheme of things.

Instructional Specificity

Fourth, and finally, there is the need for instructional specificity for art criticism implementation. A review of art criticism formats within art education literature that I recently completed indicates that this is crucial (Hamblen, 1985). I began my review with the question of "What would an art teacher find in the literature that would help him or her implement art criticism instruction?" After the review, my answer to that question was, "not an awful lot."

The paucity of information on methodologies for implementation has also been noted by Geahigan (1980) and Lankford (1984). In the literature, there appears to be a so-called assumption-of-good-intentions-attitude in the sense that since art criticism instruction should happen and that it is good for students, then somehow it will be implemented. This optimistic tone is not warranted by the realities of instructional requirements. In terms of teacher preparation, future teachers have few ideas on instructional processes for implementing the Feldman format. But that problem is not particular to the Feldman method. I am finding that relatively few practicing art teachers have a background in art criticism instruction. I've used the Feldman method to give prospective and practicing teachers a general overview of art criticism, but I've noticed that if I leave them there, they feel good and they have that high that often comes in dealing with art but then as to what they are going to do with this approach is another matter. There needs to be very specific information on implementation and on methodologies that can be replicated in elementary and secondary classrooms.

Summary

To summarize, I have four major recommendations. First, art criticism formats need to be related to different learning styles. There needs to be made available a compilation of the range of formats from which an art teacher can select. Feldman's approach is basically a starting point; it is merely one option. To ask more of any one approach is tantamount to imputing Truth (with a capital T) to what is essentially a curriculum choice.

Second, art criticism formats need to be given an elasticity to allow for individual differences and the inclusion of different types of information, such as social content and meaning. Third, the literature needs to indicate a specificity of methodology so that teachers, initially at least, will have some guidelines that they can replicate in their particular settings. It would certainly also be helpful if specific lessons were provided that teachers could use. Feldman's approach, in itself, is not a lesson. This is probably why even those students in teacher preparation who become proficient with the Feldman format are unsure as to how it is to be used in the classroom. The steps of an art criticism format seem to dictate a method, but they actually do not. Instructional methodology needs to be looked at in terms of implementation rather than as the format of procedural steps.

Finally, it needs to be emphasized that art criticism instructional implementation is in its infancy. Although my data is not scientifically generalizable, I would estimate from my work with classroom teachers, gallery teachers, and museum docents, that approximately 10% are familiar with a formalized art critical approach. These are individuals who are actively involved in the field and committed and interested enough to attend workshops or conferences. It can be surmised that for art educators in general an even lower percentage are knowledgeable of art criticism procedures. Perhaps at this time there needs to be some tolerence in terms of implementation and what art criticism instruction can accomplish. Maybe it is unrealistic to be overly concerned with purity of form and adherence to some ideal of what art criticism should be--rather, one should focus practically on what can be done. At this point, I would be very pleased if there were some or more art critical dialogues, irrespective of what format is used.

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Feldman on Feldman

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You can imagine my feelings in listening to these very kind remarks. I expected something worse--to be torn up one side and down the other. Instead I received a number of gentle and considerate comments about the so-called Feldman method. I listened with interest and enjoyed what I heard.

I don't know precisely how to respond because I don't feel wounded. So, let me offer you an anecdotal history of how I got into the business of art criticism. Have any of you heard me talk about this? Well, not too many.

As I was saying to Jack (Hobbs), I didn't know what phenomenology was (I said I couldn't spell it) but found myself as an impecunious young instructor at Carnegie Tech in the fifties trying to earn some money over and above my salary. So, I took on a class at the Pittsburgh Plan for Art where I had to introduce the work of artists in the area to potential collectors.

Here was a great house near a park where comtemporary art was continuously on exhibition. Pittsburgh had many excellent artists and craftsmen who brought their work there to be seen and, hopefully, purchased. All the work was juried, and it was of generally high quality.

We didn't have the term yuppies then, but young, upwardly mobile couples did come to buy art. In addition, there were well-to-do industrialists, U. S. Steel vice presidents and their wives who would show up to see and buy art. Many of them were the products of elite colleges and universities. A few of the women had sat at the feet of Alfred Barr at Vassar and had taken copious notes; they were art-historically literate and they had traveled extensively abroad. They were very privileged folk.

Well, it was astonishing to me that their costly higher education had not served them very well. It didn't help them when dealing with works of art for which there was no standard literature, no college notes, no received opinions. If this applied to the Pittsburgh elite, imagine how it would apply to the graduates of public schools who hadn't read Kenneth Clark, E. H. Gombrich, or H. W. Janson.

The question we face as teachers is how to make works of art accessible to persons of all ages and social conditions who would like to get some good out of them. What must they study, what must they have experienced, what *a priori* knowledge must they have, before they can come into meaningful contact with the monuments of art--traditional and comtemporary? The question was not being addressed very successfully then.

By hit or miss, I stumbled onto the so-called Feldman method. But I *did* it first and wrote about it afterwards. I want you to know that the method the panel has been discussing was based on teaching experience as opposed to armchair theorizing or extrapolating from learning theory and educational research.

My work was based on the exigencies of encountering works of art and being a critic, struggling with images, making guesses, being wrong, and trying to communicate my ideas and intuitions to students. So, I developed an approach that I think of as *inductive*: starting with the surface of an object and proceeding to depth. In the 1950s I knew nothing about surface counters and depth counters (to use Kaelin's language); I merely knew that teachers know--that you start from where you are with the people you have, the images given by art, and your own hunches about what will work. You arrive at meanings by refining your observations and you try to postpone closure so there will be room to correct your mistakes.

There was a psychiatrist at the University of Pittsburgh who was training physicians in how to take case histories. He thought my descriptive and analytic techniques were pretty good. He said he would use them to teach medics how to take a history and how not to prejudge symptoms, how to observe intelligently, and how to form hypotheses for interpreting data. So, I got some well-qualified encouragement along the way.

In discussions that have come up here and elsewhere, I have been accused (erroneously) of formalism. (In fact I was scolded in college for *denouncing* formalism in 1948.) Recently, I gave an address at Montclair State College to the members of FATE on the subject, "Formalism and Its Discontents." Indeed, I believe formalism is one of the most serious diseases that afflicts art education in the United States. It has seeped into all levels of instruction so that many artists and teachers think form in itself is the ultimate, the *ding an sich*, of art. They believe that form exists for the sake of form. Presumably, the goal of art and aesthetic education is to produce human beings who can see and respond to pure form. I think that is a psychological impossibility, yet many textbooks are written on the assumption that art instruction entails teaching people to recognize form and enthuse about it. They are supposed to have aesthetic experiences based on encounters with form *apart from what it means in the course of their involvement in the world*. Anyone with practical art teaching experience can see that this is a good way to alienate people from art. Students want to know what art means and what light it throws upon their existence. Who can blame them for becoming bored with arid commentary about symmetry and balance and fractured space *detached from* the social matrices in which these qualities and concepts are encountered.

Formalism presents another problem when it becomes the sole ingredient of critical method. When you have to explain art--art of all times and places, not just the art of New York, London, and San Francisco, you realize that it is not always created for the delectation of aesthetes, or for millionaires' penthouses, or for museum curators' private pleasure. The carved figure given to an African woman who is barren and wants to have a baby is not created for aesthetic, or museological, or stylistic, reasons. It is created so that she will conceive, and if you explain it only in aesthetic terms you miss much of its meaning--the meaning its forms were designed to support; you lift it out of its living context and contribute to the obscurantism that passes for education in some circles. What we call aesthetics is a relatively recent concern in the history of art; the production of art for aesthetic reasons is only about two centuries old. The kind of pleasure yielded by the art of Matisse is by no means a universal preoccupation. Aesthetic values are real, but they do not represent the only kind of value supported by art. If you restrict the art curriculum to works of art created for aesthetic purposes, then you are going to eliminate many important artworks. Surely the Sistine Ceiling was not created for aesthetic reasons; nor Goya's Disasters of War etchings; nor Picasso's Guernica.

Another point--I distinguish between the history of art and art criticism. If you want to find out how Leonardo felt in 1490; how he applied for a job with the Duke of Milan; who was jealous of him; what he thought about the hierarchy of sculpture, painting, and literature--you can study these questions with art historians. When you reconstruct the original context of an artwork--how it was first seen and appreciated by its patrons--you are doing art-history. But when you want to find out what a work of art means to kids in Pittsburgh in 1985, that's art criticism: It is the explication of art in a present context for a public you know....or think you know. There is a place where the twain do meet, but the distinction between history and criticism should nevertheless be made. In this regard, I believe the Getty separation of art criticism from art history is generally right. Both art history and art criticism should be taught in the schools, but not as arid routines of memorizing names and dates, or uncritical acceptance of received opinions.

The inadequacy of writing on the sociology of art has been mentioned. We know the names of those who have taken a sociological approach--Frederick Antal, Arnold Hauser, Anthony Blunt, John Berger, and Tim Clark. Much of the sociology of art has been written by Marxists who have a political as well as a sociological axe to grind. Still, we in art education should be doing more sociological analysis, more work on the consumption of art--with art defined to include every type of man-made image. I fought for the admission of this Social Theory Caucus as an affiliated group of NAEA, over some opposition. Not because I love you so much, but because I thought we needed a counter to the overwhelming psychological and child developmental biases of the profession. So, I am glad you are here, but now you have to justify your existence.

Audience Discussion

Following the panel presentations, the audience offered comments, questioned emphases, and asked for clarity on issues related to the Feldman Method. Some of these concerns are related here. Feldman's responses are included.

Issue: Form is important to communicate intentions. The organization and balance of the Sistine Ceiling contribute to its magnificence.

Feldman: That is a partial truth--form is real--but analysis that stops with formal description seriously weakens interpretation. The Sistine Ceiling frescoes are an attempt to explain the moral history of mankind. Formal analysis is useful in that it gives us access to works from many cultures without our special knowledge of that culture, but that is only the beginning: to interpret art (which is our central educational task) we have to investigate the impingements of form on the lives of people--the people who happen to be our constituents. We have to find connections between the meanings of art and the needs and interests of our constituents.

Formalist doctrines have become a fetish which has made art educationally impotent, and that is why our profession is in trouble. There is very little you can say about form besides saying that it exists, or that it evolved, or that it is identical to content--all of which is learned nonsense.

The trouble with Bell and Fry is that they have nothing intelligent to say about art as it enters the lives of real people, as opposed to the Bloomsbury crowd. How do you know form is any good? You just know it because you attended Oxford or knew Vanessa intimately. We get no guide or method that reasonably intelligent people can use to determine what a particular organization of form urges, or says, or recommends. When we come to the actual teaching of art according to formalist doctrines, we are in a bind. To say that "it turns me on" is not art criticism, especially in an educational context.

Now, about what you do in privacy, when looking at a Matisse, with a glass of sherry in one hand and a cigar in the other--about that we shouldn't talk or teach.

Issue: Is there a differentiation to be made between criticism and response? Literal/detached--global/involved? Should aesthetic perception be differentiated from aesthetic criticism?

Feldman: Art historians do not handle the issue.

Issue: Aestheticians say that is what is wrong with the approach art historians take.

Feldman: Aestheticians need to look at more art?

Issue: Does critical analysis lead to fuller aesthetic response? (a number of voices on this issue)

1. One can be very analytical and have little aesthetic response.
2. One can have an aesthetic response and not engage in analysis at all.
3. Analysis leads to heightened aesthetic perception--leads to a new looking--it may or may not lead to greater aesthetic response.
4. An aesthetic response is global, not sequential--not A, B, C.
5. Criticism takes place in a context; therefore, it is socially concerned.
6. Historical, critical, aesthetic, emotional, and practical concerns must be considered at the response level of the audience--children and adult alike.

Issue: Should we be concerned that the system (Feldman Method) may be used as law?

1. Those who use the method adapt it to their own needs.
2. Teachers project their own values on the system.
3. Teachers use the system to teach their own values.
4. The system has greater or lesser application according to the cultural-social values of the audience: a network of economic, marketing, and social concerns interface with aesthetic values, but cannot be explained by aesthetics.

Issue: The term, aesthetic value, lacks precision.

1. Is the value in the object-formalism/objectivism.

2. Is the value determined by the audience-contextualism/ pragmatism.
3. How does the teacher make use of a knowledge of aesthetic theories?
4. Aesthetic value varies depending on one's philosophy of art.

Feldman: We are trying to use works of art to illuminate people's lives. This is not necessarily an aesthetic concern: It is an intellectual, emotional, and economic concern. One of my educational goals is that people not be used and exploited. Art education has a role to play in preventing emotional and cognitive exploitation. Indeed, art can do this better than many other subjects in the curriculum because so much of our thinking, feeling, and behaving has visual roots.

My system of valuing (Feldman Method) has three grounds: formalism, expressivism, and instrumentalism. These are the grounds that most critics use to determine whether a work is good or not. Formalists say all the parts of a work cohere, get along together, and are harmonious: the work pleases me, and people constructed like me will like it as much as I do. Expressivists say the work is good because it speaks truly about matters that count. Instrumentalists say that a work is good because it aims our emotions and thought and behavior in a direction that church, state, party, or corporation believe is good for us.

Much art is designed to affect human productive activity and purchasing behavior. It tells us who or what to like or dislike, how to spend our money, and what behavior to emulate. These things have little to do with art as art; they have much to do with the organization of our emotions, our social lives, and the physical shape of our collective existence.

Issue: Capriciousness of circumstance affects what is taken as valuable.

1. Luck plays an important part in what is considered valuable.
2. Press and marketing are part of circumstances.

For full understanding, which is idealistic, one needs access to the following kinds of knowledge: experiential, formal, contextual, symbolic, and more.

Professional Networking in Art Education

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Abstract

The social scientist provides three levels of analysis whereby the sociology of art educators can be examined: (1) statistical information, (2) formal organizational structures, and (3) informal, life-world experiences. Although the first two levels provide valuable information, it is proposed that it is within informal, life-world experiences that professional networking occurs and where the character of much of the field of art education is shaped. In this descriptive and analytical study, the sociology of art educators is examined as a function of networks of power and influence. The discussion is limited to art educators with PhD or EdD degrees who are employed at colleges and universities or who are in arts management positions.

Professional Networking in Art Education

Art educators comprise a social, professional class that, within a certain latitude, shares common educational characteristics, professional interests, operating assumptions, procedures, and goals. Art educators also share a depressed job market and limited professional opportunities. Using three frameworks of analysis from the social sciences, in this paper the sociology of art educators is examined as a function of networks of power and influence. These networks are constructed, maintained, and, at times, reformulated so that art educators can perpetuate their ideas and have access to incomes.

Within a field wherein all members cannot equally benefit from their educational background, having or needing the power to control professional access routes of power becomes a strong motivating force. In this paper it will be proposed that many of the behaviors, actions, and values within art education can be seen as being predicated on a system of professional networking. Whom one knows and where personal credits can be accumulated become a form of capital that can be bartered for professional opportunities. Professional networks can be constructed for purposes of mutual benefit and to further the development of the field.

When there is a limited and unequal distribution of opportunities, professional networks can also be avenues for obtaining advantages by those with access to power brokerages. In this paper it will be primarily this latter manifestation of professional networking that will be discussed.

Art Educators' Class Membership

Art educators comprise one group within the New Class which consists of the intellectual and technological elite of modern society (Galbraith, 1969; Gouldner, 1979). Unlike the Old Class power elite of the nineteenth century that relied upon the accumulation of tangible commodities for their capital, the New Class' capital consists of the possession of educational credentials based on abstract knowledge skills and an ability to manipulate ideas, theories, and information. Essentially, the New Class forms the foundation of our Information Society. According to Gouldner (1979), the New Class encompasses a number of professional speech communities that have in common an ability to examine the premises of their operating procedures.

Art educators have been characterized as members of the culture of aesthetic discourse in that they possess an elaborated knowledge base in art and an ability to articulate such knowledge for educational purposes (Hamblen, 1984). Aesthetic cultural capital is the commodity of art educators, and the value it can bring defines their relationship to society-at-large. And, "herein lies the problem and the primary source of the art educator's sense of alienation from society. Capital is socially defined. A skill, a commodity, or even a tangible good is only as valuable as society says it is." (Hamblen, 1985, p. 2) In a society in which nonverbal knowledge modalities, affective responses, and aesthetic qualities are given lesser value than that which is verbal and quantifiable, art educators possess a form of capital with limited social legitimacy.

Art educators share a more-or-less common fund of knowledge. Pennsylvania State graduates of the 1970s may have an elaborated speech code within phenomenology, and a graduate of the University of Oregon may place a sociocultural screen of interpretation upon art classroom phenomena. Particular interpretations and emphases within art educators' knowledge base are not inconsequential and do play a role in professional networking. These are, however, academic dialects. Within the scope of this paper, it is not the knowledge itself that is of significance, but rather the professional network to which such knowledge is related. Art educators' relationships to society are predicated on the possession of a particular type of knowledge capital, and, as a group, art educators' actions are interpreted according to the social value placed on such knowledge. In contrast, within the social unit of art education itself, capital becomes personal. It consists of actions that form a professional network of personal relationships. When one's focus of study is the field of art education itself, capital is based not so much upon what art educators know as whom they know.

Levels of Analysis

The social scientist provides three levels of analysis whereby the sociology of art educators can be examined: (1) statistical information, (2) formal organizational structures, and (3) informal, life-world experiences. These levels have a hierarchial relationship to each other inasmuch as they proceed from what is ostensibly objective to what increasingly requires personal interpretations, from that which is quantifiable to that which is qualitative, from a linear presentation of information to the ongoing flux of life experiences. Although each level provides valuable information, it will be proposed that the grass roots level of the informal life-world best captures the flavor of art edcucation. Professional networking is not codified nor are procedures stable for gaining access. Professional networking occurs within the flux of relationships and ever-changing configurations of power.

Statistical Information

According to collected figures, there were 40 doctorates awarded in art education in 1977-78 (Pepin & Wells, 1977-78), 55 in 1980-81 (Grant & Synder, 1983-84), and 42 in 1982 (Stein, 1984). In a survey of 87 art education departments at universities, 64% of the faculty was male, 36% female, with 34% of the males and 16% of the females at the rank of full professor (Glenn & Sherman, 1983).

The tools of the empirical social scientist are demographic distributions that tell us who art educators are, where they are, and other objective information. Such distributions can be analyzed for their social and professional implications. The Chronicle of Higher Education, the College Art Association Bulletin, and NAEA's Placement Service together listed 16 openings in 1984. During the same period of time 105 art education related dissertations were cited in Dissertation Abstracts International (Hamblen, 1985). Obviously, job opportunities are scarce for art educators. However, the statistics only hint at the actual behaviors, values, and attitudes fomented by the reality of unemployment in one's field of professional preparation or by the frustration of not being promoted or granted tenure due to sexism. Hence, the statistics provide valuable information that substantiates certain actions, but do not deal with how individuals actually cope within the field and how they make adjustments in their professional lives because of those facts.

Formal Organizational Structures

Formal social units specific to art education consist of local, state, national, and international professional organizations and their particular organizational structures. Museum, private foundations, and federal, state, and local art councils also employ art educators and provide them with professional opportunities and prestige.

Certainly universities and colleges are the most dominant and visible institutions in which art educators exercise their cultural capital. Professional identities are often based upon place of education or employment, and power can be accrued commensurate with the contacts and image afforded by particular universities.

It is through formal organizations that aesthetic cultural capital is exercised. Formal social units are the source of employment and professional activities. Moreover, the collective image of art education is given expression in journals, newsletters, grants, research studies, consultancies, and conferences sponsored by these social units. Access to and placement within such units are most often the goals and rewards of skillful professional networking.

Formal professional units are formed for mutual professional benefit, to further the spectrum of influence of aesthetic cultural capital, and to provide avenues for exercising particular viewpoints within art education. Inequities arise in that the number of applicants wishing access to these units of professional opportunity far exceeds the means by which aesthetic cultural capital is exercised. Limited journal space, decreasing higher education enrollments, cutbacks in departmental positions, and the hierarchial structure inherent to most professional organizations ensures that there will be a lack of free access.

Such inequities are not the sole province of art education; they are endemic to any social organization based on hierarchial principles. These inequities are, however, exacerbated by the fact that art education has questionable social legitimacy. If aesthetic cultural capital were a highly valued commodity in modern society, there would be a greater sense of professional potential, if not an actual growth in the number and size of professional units. This takes us to the social scientist's third level of study wherein values are constructed and actions occur and are given meaning.

Informal Life World Experiences

Statistics reveal patterns of emphasis. Formal social units indicate access routes and the goals of professional networking. Informal relationships are the means by which access is gained. On the third level of resolution, the statistic that there were 42 doctoral graduates in 1982 (Stein, 1984) or a flow chart indicating the organizational structure of NAEA are translated into lived, shared experiences that constitute the intricate networks of the art education profession. Networking is not statistical, although it is revealed in statistics; it has no formal social configurations, although access to formal units is its objective. Networking is the profession as it is experienced, gossiped, manipulated, and shaped. Beyond the job description of professional duties is the luncheon during which policies are actually formulated. Beyond the formal listing of jobs provided by NAEA's Placement Service is the conversation in the hotel lobby during a conference that recommends one candidate and discredits another. The informal life-world of art educators reveals the differences between the statistic that there are approximately 21.5 articles published in Studies in Art Education per year (1982-1983) and experiences scholars have had with particular editorial readers. In this paper it is proposed that it is within these informal, life-world experiences that professional networking occurs and that it is here that the character of much of the field of art education is shaped.

Networking in Art Education

On the basis of educational affiliations, professional memberships, and university employment, art educators build a repertoire of professional networks. A generation of Lowenfeld-trained researchers gained not only a particular educational perspective but also the prestige of having worked with an internationally known educator. For a time in the 1970s, the University of Oregon was informally known as Ohio West and Ohio State University was called Oregon East due to the symbiotic relationships maintained through visiting professorships and organizational contacts. Graduates from a university acquire connections that may or may not afford entry into organizational or employment positions depending upon their university's status. There is the Pennsylvania State Connection, The Teachers College Connection, and so on, as well as a series of changing connections due to retirements, deaths, or a refocusing of emphasis that might signal a department's decline. As one enters the profession, a tacit knowledge is built up of who is who, whose person someone is, who is his/her own person, who is somebody, and who is a nobody. In a mosaic of shifting cliques and alliances, the texture of art education is continually created and recreated.

It might provide an amusing pastime to observe this panorama of power shifts and of positions that are filled and refilled in a game of musical chairs as academic gypsies make their treks from campus to campus. This, however, is a serious matter. On a personal level, career opportunities hang in the balance; for the field of art education itself, perhaps there are even more important consequences.

The Myths of Academia

It is ventured that few people in the field have not had some experience, either personal or observed, of professional networking operating to grant or deny opportunities. Professional networking has its own protocol which, when properly followed, translates into positions of power and influence. The initiate must master the nuances of breaking bread with the right people, of selecting an "in" graduate school, of attending the right conferences, of presenting topical papers that are insightful without being iconoclastic, of being careful not to make laudatory remarks about a researcher who has fallen out of vogue, and so on. Properly done, professional networking can take on the outward grace, elegance, and understated sophistication of relationships in a Henry James novel.

Aesthetic cultural capital is exercised within the field on the basis of who one knows, how well one can manipulate the formal system, and how skillfully one can position one's self. This is not to imply that ability is not rewarded or that professional opportunities are given only to those who have cultivated an influential network. Rather, mastering professional networking can provide the cutting edge in a highly competitive field.

In an article titled "Debunking the Myth of Academe," Shaw (1985) questions the academic image of communal congeniality.

> The myth of academic life is certainly a seductive one: a productive, creative life supported by plentiful institutional resources, with rewards based solely on individual merit and performance. . . In the changing context of higher education, however, the reality of 1985 does not conform to the myth. (p. 14)

In a discussion of sex inequities among faculty, Rush (1985) emphasizes the need for women to understand the social dynamics of discriminatory practices. For a woman, departmental approval is not necessarily predicated on publications and expertise in research, which may actually elicit criticism, but rather on how well she personally relates to fellow faculty members. Only an exceptionally high degree of off-campus recognition will protect her from possible discriminatory practices.

Bowker and Lynch (1985) observe two levels of professional networking, one at the home institution, the other through the national forum of one's discipline.

> Research professors use publications, presentations at national meetings, research grants, and positions in national professional organizations to gain prestige that ties them more closely to their disciplines than to their home institutions. (p. 52)

An ability to move to another institution, to participate on editorial boards, to be elected to national professional offices, and to be hired for consultancies require that one engage in some form of national networking. As noted by Bowker and Lynch (1985) and Rush (1985), national networking creates options and may serve as an antidote to inaccessible departmental political power. "On the surface, universities live by principles like academic freedom. Underneath, they live by political and social expediency, what women call the old boy network." (Rush, 1985, p. 17) Both on the national and departmental level there are networks of both old boy and old girl varieties that need to be understood and cultivated. An abridgment of the etiquette involved "can result in a combination of economic hardship, social ostracism, and psychological isolation." (Miller, 1976, p. 10) Punishments are swift, often sure, and, for all practical purposes, public for the art educator. The field is small enough to know who has been this year's Peck's Bad Boy (or Girl) and who has offended the powers that be. Art educators disappear and reappear on the scene according to their level of professional network involvement.

Ideological differences coupled with a conscious or subconscious ignoring of networking dynamics can result in a professional ostracism that may be geographical as well as psychological. Art educators are often few in number at any one university and hence may not have contact with influential colleagues. They may find themselves isolated within their home departments and removed from the national forum. If any type of security is to be had, art educators need to delicately establish state and national networks without offending fellow departmental faculty.

Networking Inconsistencies with New Class Assumptions

According to Gouldner (1979), members of the New Class believe that their particular type of cultural capital represents the highest achievements of humankind and that those possessing such capital should provide moral, intellectual, political, and social leadership. This is especially true of professional groups on the humanities end of the humanity-technology New Class continuum. Correspondingly, with their moral manifest destiny and with their deep sense of commitment, the New Class believes that they should receive the highest rewards and greatest respect.

No differently than other professional groups within the New Class, art educators have not been reticent in extolling the benefits of art study. From much of the literature in art education, it would appear that art educators are not just teaching art; they are also dispensing benevolence, an understanding of all groups in society, a sensitivity to individual differences, and a compassion for the disadvantaged. If one formed an image of art education from the literature, one would have to conclude that there is not a mean bone in art education's collective body. It is against this backdrop of goodness and mercy that the stark realities of professional networking occur. While the democratic principles of opportunity for all and respect for the development of the individual are loudly touted in theory, if not classroom practice, art education professionals themselves experience treatment that is often based on how well they have mastered the intricacies of political game playing and administrative machinations. While students are told that there are no losers in the art room and while all art work is conscientiously displayed irrespective of value or merit, the art educator must grapple with a highly competitive network of limited and disproportionately distributed rewards. The disparity between the lofty, idealistic rhetoric expressed through the formal social units of art education and the lived experience of limited opportunites can be expected to cause confusion, alienation, and professional disenchantment.

Art educators are not only party to the myth of academia that "faculty in America lead lives devoted to the selfless pursuit of knowledge in institutions carefully organized to support that pursuit"

(Shaw, 1985, p. 5); they are also in a discipline that has limited social credibility. They have bought into the myth that they are above the exigencies of profit motivations in their exercise of aesthetic cultural capital, that they have a social and moral obligation to aesthetically improve society, that democratic principles infuse their practices. Yet, these same qualities are not always experienced in their professional careers.

Outcomes

Disparities and inconsistencies between the proclamations of formal social units, such as professional organizations and journals, and informal lived experiences puts the name to the lie that permeates the New Class in general and academia in particular. Behind the benign serenity of professionalism's mask are jealousies, dislikes, and downright hatreds that would rival the intense fanaticism of a fascist. Although personal losses and gains can be tallied from professional networking, the impact on the field of art education is less apparent. When etiquette requirements of professional networking are not clearly stated, yet any abridgment can portend dire consequences, a certain amount of conservatism will result.

It is ironic that a field that has emphasized creativity is often characterized by surprisingly timid and cautious professional behaviors. Major programs supported by influential art educators may receive no critical input. A twenty year time lag is common between a proposal and its tentative implementation. Teaching art for creativity, self-expression, and technical skill development are still major rationales for many art programs. Using a scatological analogy, Chalmers (1985) suggests that many art educators have developed a tremendous capacity for holding onto ideas long after they are still useful. A backup of ideas slows down the system's ability to implement innovative programs.

Gouldner (1979) states that intellectuals thrive on rules and that they believe that those who "know the rule, who know the theory by which they act, are superior because they lead an 'examined' life. . . . They value doctrinal conformity for its own sake." (p. 84) An emphasis on methodology and a lesser concern for what that methodology is accomplishing has been the hallmark of researchers who have been overly concerned with the outward appearances of propriety.

Anderson (1985) notes that a certain amount of rule-following is necessary if a social unit is to maintian and promulgate its identity. Institutionalized conservatism, however, can stifle needed changes. Anderson imputes the existence of docile educational behaviors to socialization processes that are on the hidden agenda of most elementary and secondary schools. Each level of the educational ladder requires an increase in obsequiousness.

> Doctorates are not necessarily given to the most creative people, but more often to those who have learned to conduct themselves in such a way as to successfully make it through all the required rites of passage. A certain kind of acceptance of the status quo is required of those who would advance through the educational system--either acceptance or phenomenal cunning and patience.
> (Anderson, 1985, p. 24)

As one progresses through the educational system and becomes socialized in its taken-for-granted attitudes and behaviors, "one becomes increasingly reticent to tamper with that system in any significant way." (Anderson, 1985, p. 22) Rewards come from maintaining the status quo. Thus, those most central to the system are not dissenters. Those peripheral to the system can be dissenters, but, unless craftily done, they risk being barred entry to that system. The goal is to be able to exercise one's aesthetic cultural capital in a meaningful and significant manner that provides incomes and psychological rewards. Professional networking provides entry to the system through the well-worn paths of influential mentors, but the costs to personal integrity and dignity are not negligible.

An oversupply of doctoral graduates in general, and in art education in particular, limits the opportunities of new faculty and curtails "the infusion of creative young minds into higher education." (Shaw, 1985, p. 11) The academic system has become dangerously top heavy, with supply far-exceeding demand. The recession resulted in program cut-backs, and the future portends even greater declines in enrollments. In terms of cost and efficiency--the sacred criteria of university administrators--marginal programs such as art education face an uneasy future.

Conclusions

Research for this paper was initiated by one of those chance, informal experiences that tends to verify this author's thesis that the character of art education often may be clearly revealed through personal networks. At a recent NAEA Conference, a relatively young art educator discussed her plans for an early retirement that she had begun to formulate shortly after entering higher education employment. Over the years, she had invested wisely and was now nearly financially independent. In the coming years, she envisioned even more viscousness and lack of opportunities than she had experienced in her university employment. According to her, the level of professional abuse is dramatically escalating, and she wishes to avoid the upcoming fray.

In other conversations, other art educators have also discussed their escape plans from a profession in which they have dearly invested time, effort, and money to obtain the necessary educational credentials. Art education is embattled from without by an unresponsive public. It is battling within on an informal, personal level where the stakes are jobs, consultancies, organizational positions, editorships, and so on. It bears repeating that this situation is not particular to the field of art education. It occurs in any system in which supply exceeds demand, where there is an unequal distribution of capital, and where such distribution is not always made upon need or merit.

It is doubtful that the life-worlds of art educators will ever coincide with the lofty rhetoric found in the literature. This fact calls for some realignment in the thinking and actions of art educators. Moscotti, a psychiatrist, suggests that there needs to be an acknowledgement in family and educational training that goodness is not always found in life experiences (Sifford, 1985). Moscotti believes that much of the population is raised to be obedient Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. They are not emotionally or conceptually trained to deal with social realities. Everyone who is encountered in life is not a good scout, and the rules of professional life do not always follow those in the game book. Moscotti believes that citizens need to be equipped with a healthy modicum of distrust and even a little paranoia.

Professional networking is an uncodified, unwritten, but highly visible reality of art education. Women are beginning to realize that forces on the informal levels of experience have dramatically affected their careers, often in an adverse manner. Consciousness raising in regard to sex equity is but one aspect of the powerful shaping forces of professional networking. Business persons have always known that more deals are made in the 21 Club during martini lunches than are made on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. Tax deductions for professionally related activities have, in fact, given seminars and conferences the status of legitimate avenues in which to shape the professional field as well as one's career. In addition to the usual foundation courses required of graduate students, perhaps there should be classes offered in group dynamics. Just as sex education does not foster promiscuity, an open recognition of professional networking would merely enable the individual to deal better with what already exists.

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